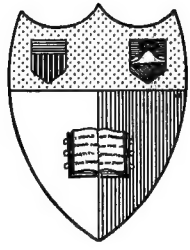
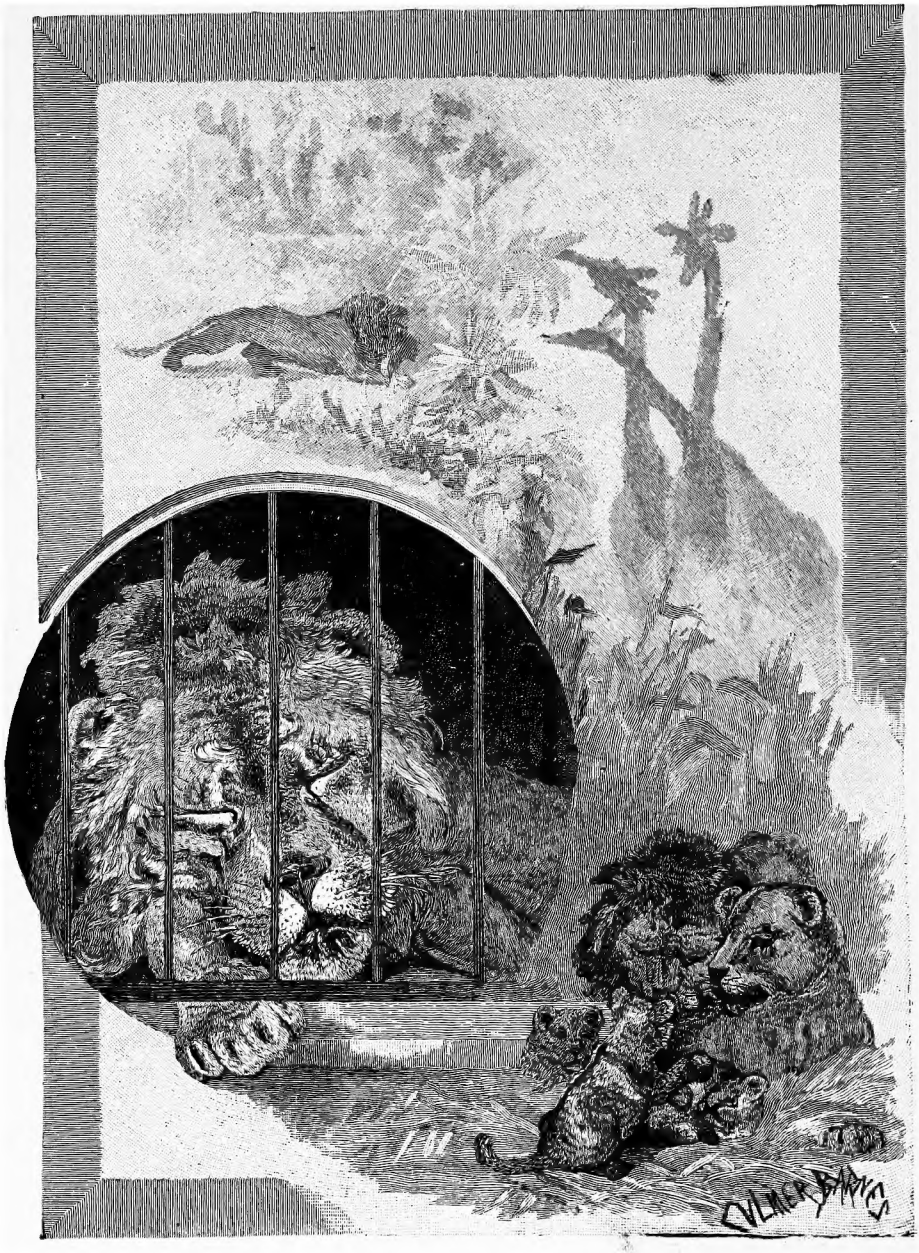
OUR FEET

TWO FEET

AND

NO FEET





A PEEP AT THE MENAGERIE.

FOUR FEET, TWO FEET, AND NO FEET;

OR,

FURRY AND FEATHERY PETS,

AND HOW THEY LIVE.

EDITED BY LAURA E. RICHARDS.

FULLY ILLUSTRATED.

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CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

TO THE CHILD READER.

Curious beasts, with paws and claws,
Curious birds, with plume and feather,
Strangest freaks of Nature's laws,
Here for you are brought together.

Owls and monkeys, pigs and bears;
Humming-birds and toads and rabbits;
Hunt them to their nests and lairs;
Study all their ways and habits.

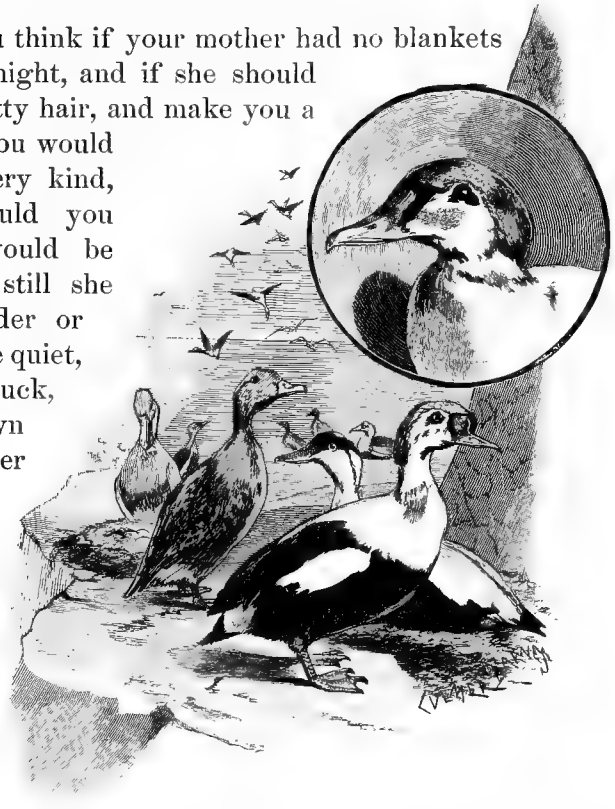
Learn how the mosquitoes talk;
Why the wasp and hornet sting you;
Learn the meaning of the songs
Linnet and canary sing you;

How the beaver builds his dam;
How the penguin feeds her baby;
Of the lobster and the clam;
What their moods and manners may be.

All these things, when you shall know,
Write a book yourself, my dearie!
For, so learned you will grow,
All the world will flock to hear ye.

FOUR FEET—TWO FEET—NO FEET.

GOOD MOTHER EIDER-DUCK.



WHAT should you think if your mother had no blankets to put over you at night, and if she should pull out all her pretty hair, and make you a blanket of that? You would think she was a very kind, loving mother, would you not? And you would be quite right. But still she would not be kinder or more loving than the quiet, unpretending eider-duck, who strips her own soft breast to keep her babies warm.

In a very cold country, far away in the Northern ocean, — Iceland it is called, — there are thousands of these beautiful birds; wherever you step you find one. You would think they would not like to stay where the rivers are always frozen, and snow is on the ground all the long year, with only a few days of sunshine. But they do, because they can be very quiet there, and do pretty much as they like.

Their nests are a sort of little mattress, made of drift-grass and sea-weed, and over it they spread a bed of finest down. The careful mother plucks this down from her own breast, heaping it up in a thick, fluffy roll around the edge of the nest.

You know that while she is sitting on her eggs she must sometimes leave the nest for food. The weather is so cold that before she goes she carefully turns this roll of down over the eggs, to keep them warm until her return. A great deal of money is made by the Icelanders in selling the down. When it is taken from the nest the little mother goes to work just as carefully as before, and makes it all over. But if they take it the second time, and her home is left with bare walls, her breast bare, too, what is she to do?

In a moment the male bird comes to her help, and plucks the down off his own breast. His feathers are whiter, though not so soft.

This down is so light that it takes a great many feathers to weigh anything at all. If you should fill your father's hat with them they would not weigh an ounce. And yet, after all, they would make you the warmest covering in the world.

The Saucy Bird.

Once there were two pretty young birds, as blue as a piece of the sky. They thought they would keep house together in the limb of a tree. Their family name was Gnat-Snapper; but they were not in the least related to the Snap-dragons or Snapping-turtles. In fact, you never saw a sweeter, gayer pair in all the days of your life.

Their nest was very neat, and the three eggs in it were white, with a pink blush all over them, like the blush that lies on apple-blossoms.

"How pleasant it is to have a home of our own!" said the bird-wife, looking at the eggs, with a twinkle in her eye.

The husband wiped his bill. "I am glad there is no rent to pay," said he.

Well, they did not know what was going to happen. They sang and were very happy, till one day, when they were both gone from home, a great brown bird came visiting. She walked in without knocking, and sat down in the nest. It was a lazy cow-bird, who had really no manners at all.

"I wish I had a pretty home like this, but I shall not take the trouble to make one," said she.

And the next thing she did was to lay an egg. Could anything have been more impolite? It was rather larger than the other eggs, and not pink, like an apple-blossom, but brown, like a ball of mud.

It was quite too bad; and when little Mr. and Mrs. Gnat-Snapper came home they were very angry, and very much surprised to find a strange egg in the nest. "But we cannot help it now," said little madam, ready to cry. "And, oh, dear, if I sit on my own pretty pink eggs I must sit on the big, brown, homely egg, too!"

Yes; and so she did. Soon her own birdie-babies came out of the pink eggs, and lovely blue darlings they were. But in a little while the big egg opened, and out stepped a lazy brown bird.

Papa scolded, and little madam cried.

"But we cannot help it now," said she. "And we must feed the big bird, too; it will never do to let her starve."

Starve? There was no danger of her starving! Oh, how she did eat! She seized all the best food that was brought to the nest, and the other birdies had to take what was left. And then, how she did push!

"This is my home," said she to the little blue nestlings, — "this is my home, and there is no room for you. Why do you stay here and crowd me so?"

Papa scolded; but the brown bird pushed and pushed.

"We cannot help it, I suppose," said little madam, weeping. "Our darlings must go, or there will be no peace."

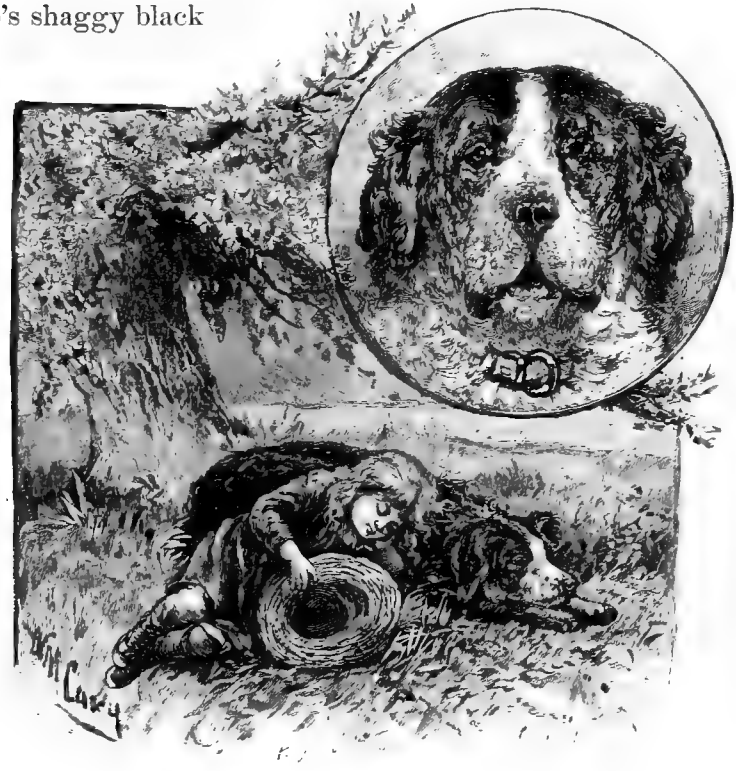
So, as soon as might be, the little blue sisters tried their wings, and one by one they flew away into the wide, wide world.

And then the little cow-bird was happy, for she had the whole nest to herself.

MARY AND DOG CARLO.

Little Mary and her great black Newfoundland dog, Carlo, were a very familiar picture to me.

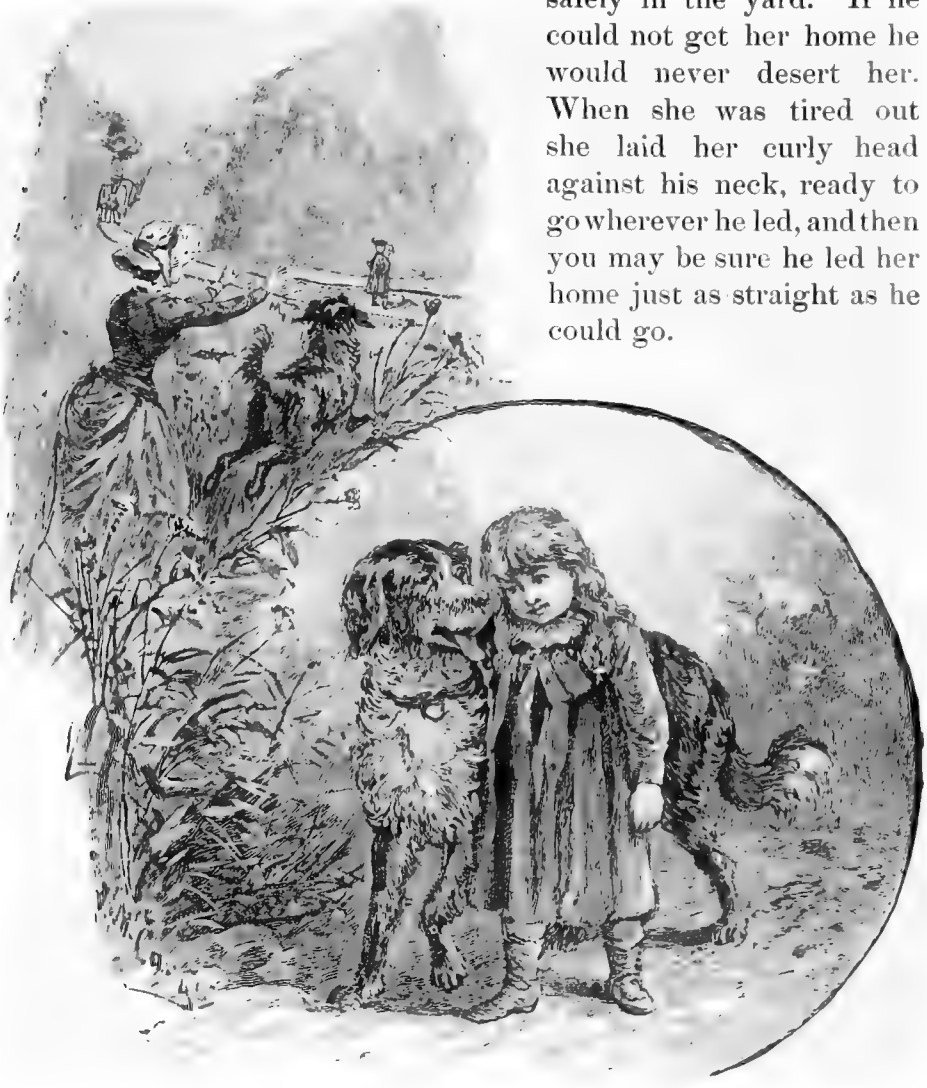
I often stopped to look at them as they ran about the yard. If it was a warm afternoon they lay asleep under the large evergreen trees. Mary's light curls made a lovely contrast to Carlo's shaggy black



sides. His loving gentleness made him seem as good as he was handsome.

Little Mary had a naughty habit of running away from home, and when she did this Carlo would not leave her for a moment. He seemed to try to get her home again. He ran before her, keeping

her from getting off the walks, and trying to coax her to turn about. Sometimes he would succeed; and then I heard his joyful bark when he saw her once more safely in the yard. If he could not get her home he would never desert her. When she was tired out she laid her curly head against his neck, ready to go wherever he led, and then you may be sure he led her home just as straight as he could go.



One day, when I came out of the gate, Carlo met me, barking and jumping about in a most anxious manner. He ran a little way,

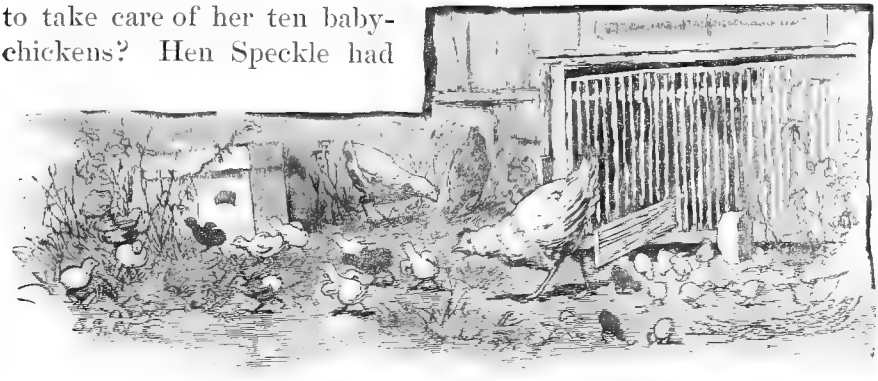
and then came back to me, as if coaxing me to follow him. I thought him too wise a dog to be mistaken; so I followed him, though a little slowly. He seemed to notice this, and to beg me to hasten. In a moment more I saw dear little Mary toddling along the railroad track. I felt sure that the dog's quick ears must have heard the train, which was coming round the curve. I hurried fast enough, I can tell you. Carlo had never before allowed me to pick her up, even for a moment. Now he seemed fairly wild with joy when I caught her in my arms. He led me home in a perfect dance of delight.

After that I was a privileged friend, for Carlo never forgot that morning. To the day of his death he thanked me, in his mute, loving way, every time he saw me.

A FUNNY LITTLE MOTHER.

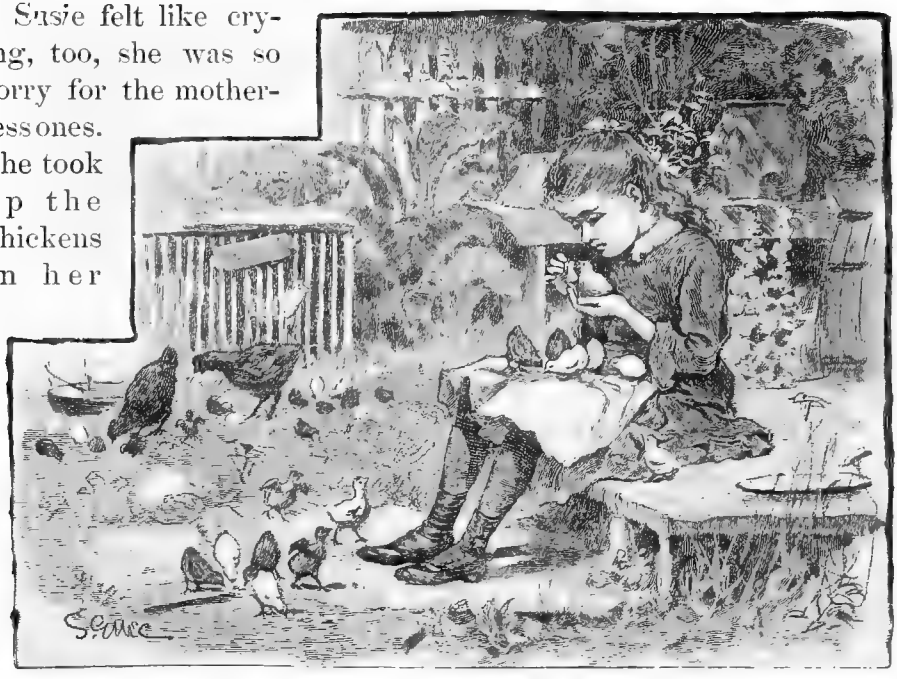
PEEP! Peep! Peep! Ten little orphan babies all crying at once, and each one trying to cry louder than the other.

What should be done with them? Poor mother Hen Blacky had been killed, and who was to take care of her ten baby-chickens? Hen Speckle had



twelve children of her own, — as many as she could cover. No room for the orphans there. Hen Whitey's eight children were so large and so ill-natured they would not let the downy little newcomers so much as look in their coop.

Hen Topknot, who had but four in her brood, would not hear of adopting any more, and taking care of the little strangers. She pecked at them so sharply that the poor things ran off, and stood in a group by themselves in a corner of the chicken-yard, crying as loud as they could cry.

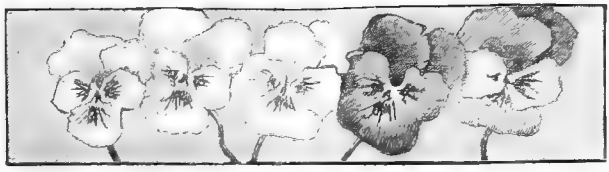


Susie felt like crying, too, she was so sorry for the motherless ones. She took up the chickens in her apron, where they cuddled down, glad to get warm, and glad to hide away from cross Hen Topknot.

"I'll be your mother, myself!" said Susie.

And a good mother she was, too. She soon taught the ten little black and white and speckled chickens to scratch for worms. She put them to bed every night in an old basket, and covered them up warm. In the morning how glad they were to see their new little mother! They ran to her wherever she was when they were tired. And such a funny sight it was to see those ten chickens fly into Susie's lap, creep under her apron, and cuddle against her neck with little cooing sounds!

They never knew any other mother, and they never wanted a better one. Susie never forgot to feed her babies, and they grew as fast and were as fine-looking as the other chickens, who had hen-mothers to take care of them. And Susie learned how to be thoughtful and kind to helpless things. But one does not often find a little girl who is mother to ten chickens.



THE CAT LEARNS TO DANCE.

Buzz, the cat, was feasting in the garden. He had a fine bowl of bread and milk, which one of the children had left there. The moon shone brightly, and the cat purred aloud for joy. All at once he cried, "What a night to dance, if there were only a fiddle!"

The wise old mouse sat at the door of his hole, with one eye on the bread and milk. "I will teach you how to dance without a fiddle," cried he.

The cat jumped up quickly. "Oh, do show me!" he shouted.

The mouse brought out some pretty paper boots with tassels. "Put these on," said he; "they are fairy boots." This made the cat laugh, and he hastened to draw the boots over his paws.

But there was wax in them, and it tickled his toes. His feet began to go up and down. Then he hopped high in the air, and skipped and spun all about the garden till he was quite out of breath.

"Oh, do stop me," he screamed; "take off these dreadful boots!"

"I only know how to make you dance," replied the mouse. "I do not know how to stop you."

So poor Buzz had to dance all night, till the boots wore out. But the wise old mouse ate up the bread and milk.

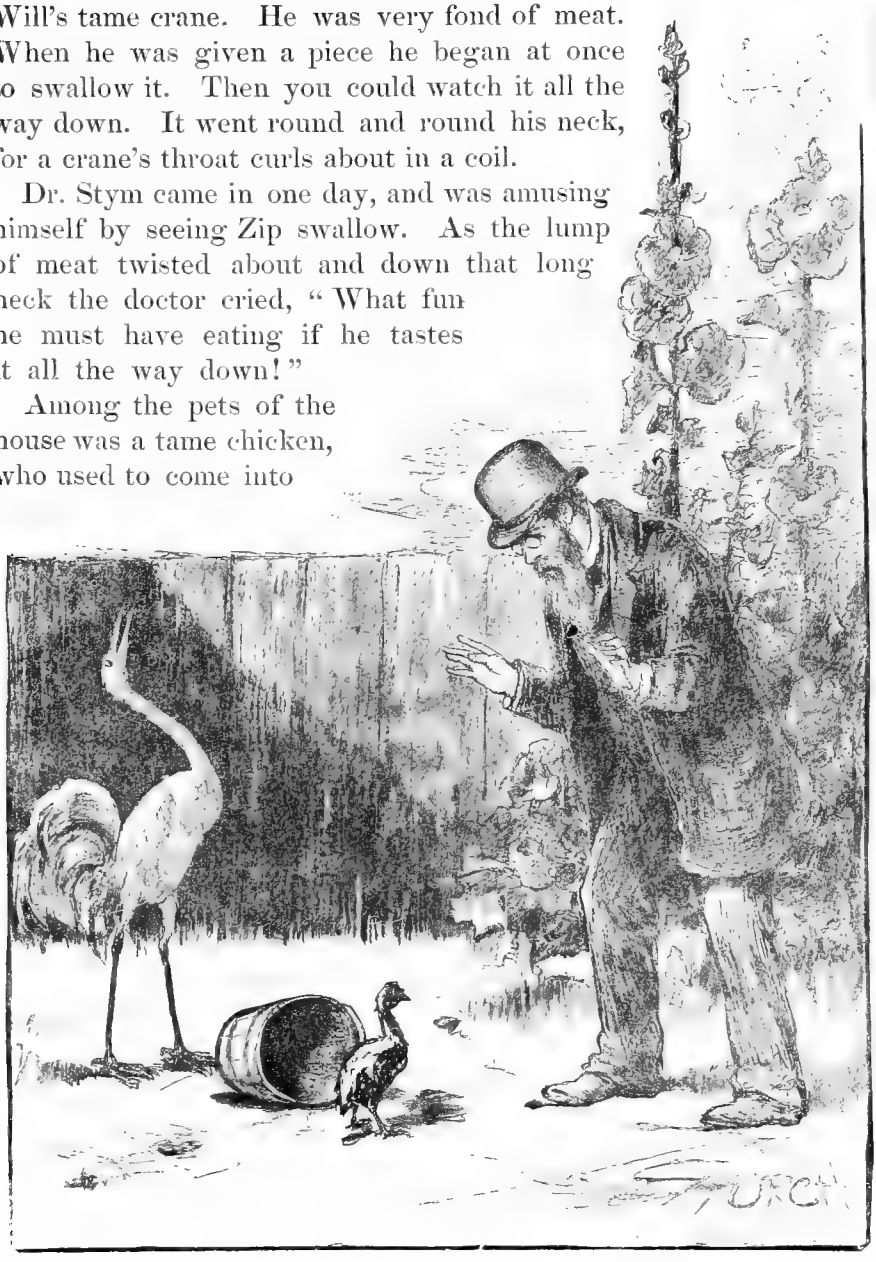
Since then cats cannot help dancing when they put on paper boots. And a proverb in cat-land says, "It takes a friendly fiddle to make merry heels."

ZIP AND BETTY.

It was "as good as a show" to see Zip eat. Zip was Uncle Will's tame crane. He was very fond of meat. When he was given a piece he began at once to swallow it. Then you could watch it all the way down. It went round and round his neck, for a crane's throat curls about in a coil.

Dr. Stym came in one day, and was amusing himself by seeing Zip swallow. As the lump of meat twisted about and down that long neck the doctor cried, "What fun he must have eating if he tastes it all the way down!"

Among the pets of the house was a tame chicken, who used to come into



the sitting-room. She would jump upon Uncle Will's knee, and eat corn from his hands. One morning, when Dr. Stym was there, he said he would like to see this famous chicken. So Uncle Will went to the door and called, "Betty! Betty!" but no chicken came. He called again and again, but no Betty was to be seen. He looked all about the yard and stable, but all in vain.

Then the doctor ran out to help in the search. To make fun, he began to look in all sorts of odd places. He felt in his pockets. He peeped under the door-mat. He looked into the key-hole. He made everybody laugh with his jokes. At last he said that Zip must have swallowed the chicken, and he would look down his throat.

Zip was standing on one foot, as usual, upon a small wooden pail; the pail was upside down, and made a fine perch for the crane. As Zip saw the doctor coming near, he stepped down to run away, and as he did so he turned the pail over. Then, lo and behold! out walked the missing Betty. The pail was so small that the poor chicken's tail was bent square about. How they all laughed at her odd figure!

"Now, did Zip hide that chicken in there?" asked Dr. Stym. Nobody knew. Zip looked wise enough to have done it. But no doubt Betty did it herself, when she hopped upon the edge of the pail, hoping to find some corn inside.

A NEW STORY.

"A STORY?" I said, as they all came clamoring around me, crying, "Story-time! story-time!" "Well, let me see! I'll tell you a story about —"

"No, you won't!" cried Billy. "I hate Jacky Nory. Tell us a nice, new story, please, mammy!"

"I'll tell you a story," I continued calmly, "about a bear, and about another bear, and about another bear."

"Oh, the three bears!" said Billy. "Well, that is good, though

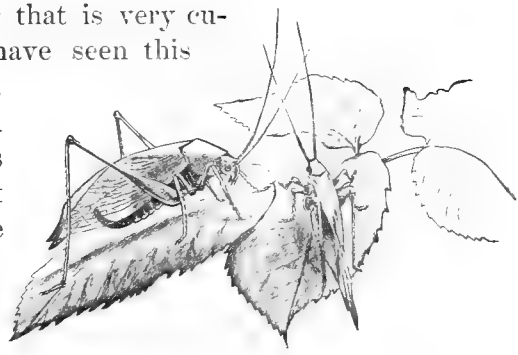
it is not new. All right, mammy! They lived in a little red house in a deep, dark forest — "

"Begging your pardon," I said, "they did nothing of the kind; and if you interrupt me again they will stay in my head, and never come out.

"These three bears," I continued, "lived in a very funny house. The front of it was open, with bars all across it, so that they could not get out. The house stood in a large park, — a very fashionable place indeed,— and the bears saw all the best society. Their names were Daddy Jack, and Mammy Joan, and Baby Betty. Betty was only a year old, and a great pet of her parents. She was a round, fat, greedy little thing, and would often take away her mother's dinner and gobble it up after eating her own. Mammy Joan sometimes gave her a cuff or a push, but not half often enough. Well, one day a little girl came to see the bears. Her name was Silverlocks, of course; all little girls who go to see bears are named Silverlocks; but she was not lost, nor was she alone, for her nurse was with her. Now, when the three bears saw Silverlocks they

came forward and poked their noses through the bars of their house. And the great, big, huge bear (that was Daddy Jack, you know) said, in his great, big, gruff voice, 'SOMEBODY HAS BROUGHT ME AN APPLE!' and the middle-sized bear, Mammy Joan, said, in her middle-sized voice, '*Somebody has brought me a cooky!*' and then Baby Betty, the little, wee bear, said, in her little, wee voice, 'Somebody has brought me some peanuts, *and there they are!*' The little bear was right, of course, as she always is in the story, for Silverlocks had a bag of peanuts in her hand, and she began to feed the bears with them; Betty first, because she was the little one, and then Mammy Joan, and then Daddy Jack. Oh, what a cracking, and crunching, and scrabbling there was! These bears were very fond of peanuts, and they had not had any for several days. Daddy Jack would cram a pawful at a time into his great red mouth, and then sit up on his hind legs and crunch them slowly and solemnly; while fat little Betty squeaked aloud with excitement, rolling about after the peanuts, as Silverlocks tossed them between the bars. At last, sad to tell, the paper bag was empty. 'Now, Miss Silverlocks,' said nurse, 'you must come home, for it is your tea-time. Say good-by to the bears!' 'Oh! *must* I go?' cried Silverlocks. 'Good-by, you dear bears! Good-by, great, big, huge bear! and good-by, middle-sized bear! and good-by, little, wee bear! I like you best, little, wee one. I wish you were mine!' Just then Baby Betty pushed her fat brown paw through the bars, hoping that more peanuts might be forthcoming; and Silverlocks, to nurse's great horror, took the paw and shook it heartily. Nurse pulled her away hastily, but the three bears were much pleased with the little girl's politeness, and they all three said, 'Good-by, my dear! Come again, and bring the peanuts with you!'"

HOW INSECTS MAKE MUSIC.

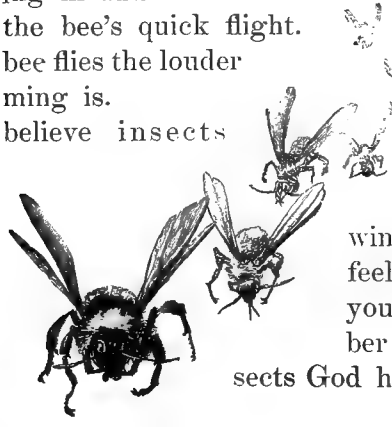


THE katydid has a wing that is very curious to look at. You have seen this little insect, I have no doubt. Its color is light green, and just where the wing joins the body there is a thick ridge, and another on the wing. On this ridge there is a thin and strong skin, which makes a sort of drumhead.

It is the rubbing of these two ridges, or drumheads, that makes the queer noise you have heard. There is no music in it, surely. The insects could keep quiet as well as not, and they must enjoy doing it.

The katydid usually makes three rubs with its drumheads, sometimes only two. You can fancy she says "Katy did," and "She did," or "She didn't." The moment it is dusk they begin. Soon the whole company are at work. As they rest after each rubbing it seems as if they answered each other.

Did you know that bees hum from under their wings? It is not the stir of those beautiful light wings we hear. It is the air drawing in and out of the air-tubes, in the bee's quick flight. The faster a bee flies the louder the humming is. Don't you believe insects feel? Indeed they do! They have nerves all over them, even through their wings, and out to the end of every feeler. They suffer just as much as you do when hurt. You must remember this, and be kind to all the little insects God has made.



FLY-AWAY FACTS.

THERE is nothing more delicate than the wings of insects. They are like gauze, but they have a framework that makes them quite firm, just as the leaves on the trees are firm from the little ribs that are in them.

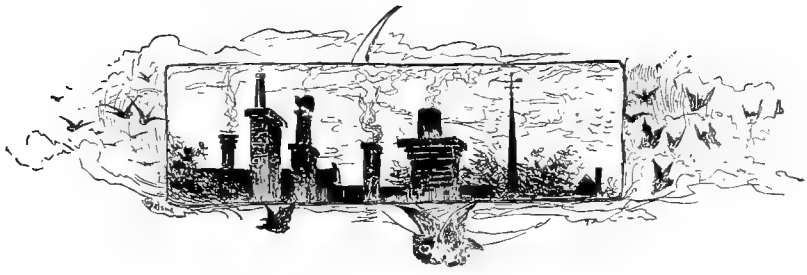
These wings are all covered with hair. You could see it under the magnifying-glass, but not otherwise.

In some small gnats the hairs spring from each side of the veins, like butterflies' feathers, or like blossoms on the twigs in springtime.

Even the wing of a common fly is very beautiful. Did you ever notice that if you take a butterfly by the wings a colored dust is all over your fingers? Then the wings are left transparent where they have been touched. If you should put some of this dust on a slip of glass, and examine it, you would find that each

particle is a little scale of regular form, and sometimes most beautifully shaped. But the insect flies just as well without the dust.

Besides his regular wings the fly has others, for sails. They are all lifted by a great number of little, tough muscles in his sides. Thus he moves in the air and darts away. Before he goes he "plumes" his wings, just like a bird.



A BIRD WITH AN UMBRELLA.

"BUT where is your umbrella?" I asked.

"On my head, of course," replied the bird. "Where is yours?"

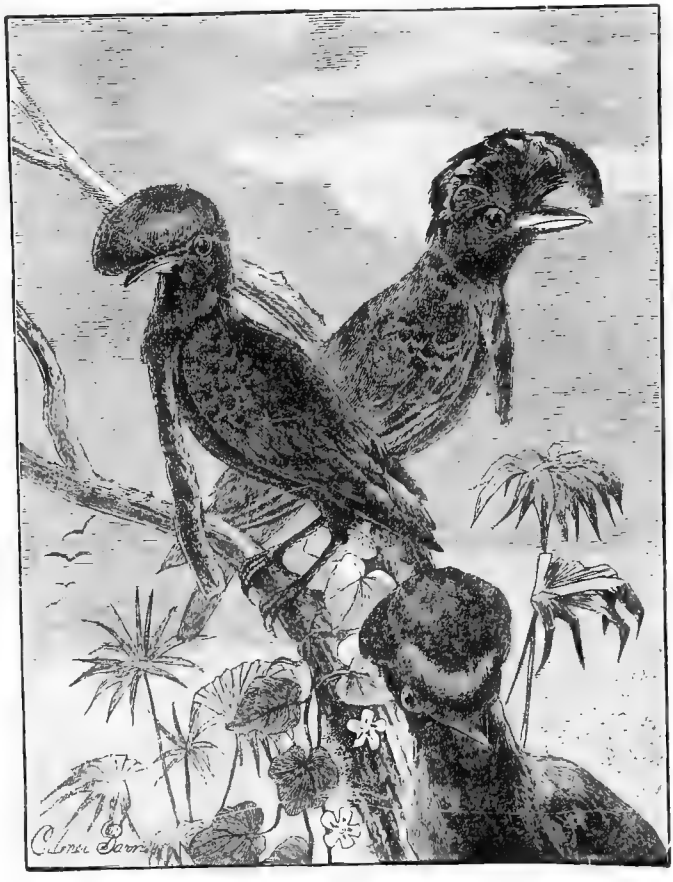
"I carry mine in my hand," said I; "though I always hold it over my head when the rain is falling."

"We say '*claw*,' not '*hand*'!" said the bird, with some severity. "You should learn to speak correctly; I am sure you are big enough. What do you call yourself?"

"I belong to the human race," I replied. "But never mind me. Tell me a little about yourself."

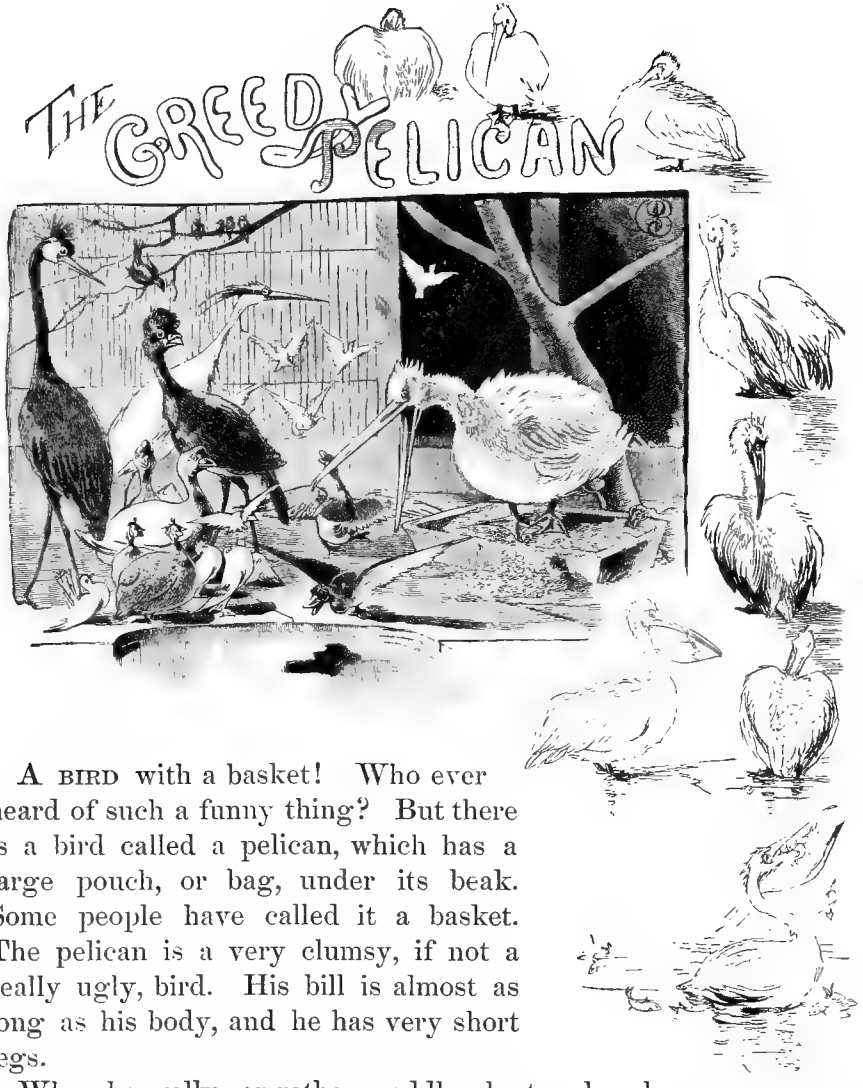
"I live in South America," said the umbrella-bird, "in the fair country of Brazil. My family is the only one, I believe, which possesses umbrellas. You see how gracefully the feathers are curved over my head, making a perfect shelter from sun and rain. This is what *I* call an umbrella; as for that hideous thing you hold in your claw, —I don't know what to call it, but I am sure no bird

would carry such a thing. Observe the fine glossy black of my coat and waistcoat! Our family never wear anything but black:



colors are so very vulgar! You see that I have also a beautiful tippet, which hangs down from my neck. I confess that I am proud of that, as well as of my umbrella. In fact, I feel that I ought, by rights, to be called *The Black Brazilian Beauty.*"

THE GREEDY PELICAN



A BIRD with a basket! Who ever heard of such a funny thing? But there is a bird called a pelican, which has a large pouch, or bag, under its beak. Some people have called it a basket. The pelican is a very clumsy, if not a really ugly, bird. His bill is almost as long as his body, and he has very short legs.

When he walks, or rather waddles, he topples along from side to side, just as you may have seen some old sailor, who is as awkward on land as a duck.

The pouch, or bag, under the pelican's bill is the most curious thing about this odd bird. Although this pouch cannot be seen except when in use, it is large enough to hold nearly a pailful of

water. The pelican uses it as a basket, in which to carry to his mate and young their dinner of fish, which he catches by diving down into the water with his mouth open.

It is fortunate that nature has fitted him to catch fish so easily. He is so greedy that for dinner he will eat as many fish as would satisfy half-a-dozen persons.

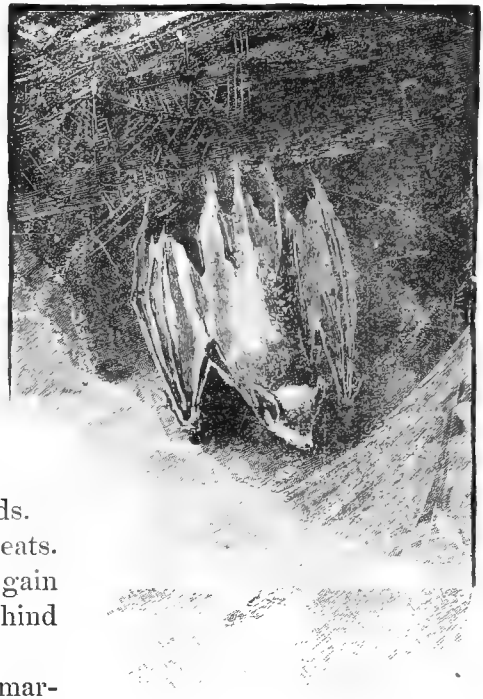
Once a pelican, which was kept in a large cage with other curious birds, acted very much like the "dog in the manger." When corn was put in the cage for the other birds to eat, the pelican stood over it, and would not permit any of the birds to get even a kernel. When a hungry little duck, or pigeon, would approach, the pelican would open his immense mouth, and make a hissing noise, which made him seem quite terrible. He looked as though he would have said, if he could have spoken, "I can't eat corn, and so you shall not eat it either. If I can't have some fish nobody shall have corn."

Finally his fish was brought, and while he was swallowing it the other birds ate up the corn.

IN WINTER TIME.

THERE are some kinds of animals that hide away in the winter that are not wholly asleep all the time. Their blood moves a little, and once in a while they take a breath. If the weather is at all mild they wake up enough to eat.

Now, isn't it curious that they know all this beforehand? Such animals always lay up something to eat, just by their side, when they go into their winter sleeping-places. But those that do not wake up never lay up any food, for it would not be used if they did.



The little field-mouse lays up nuts and grain. It eats some when it is partly awake on a warm day.

The bat does not need to do this, for the same warmth that wakes him wakes all the insects on which he feeds. He catches some, and then eats. When he is going to sleep again he hangs himself up by his hind claws.

The woodchuck, a kind of marmot, does not wake, yet he lays up dried grass near his hole. What is it for, do you think? On purpose to have it ready the first moment he wakes in the spring. Then he can eat and be strong before he comes out of his hole.

How many things are sleeping in the winter! Plants, too, as well as animals. What a busy time they do have in waking up, and how little we think about it!

Oh! Those Wasps.

SCREAMING, running, tossing up their arms, Patty and Poppy and Fan and Margery Ann came into grandma's kitchen one day. They had been playing in the meadow, and Patty had poked her foot into a nest of "queer black and yellow flies," as she called them. And oh, dear! oh, dear! *oh*, dear!!! The flies were chasing them, and sticking red-hot needles into them.

"O Katy, they're killing us,—the flies!" shrieked Margery Ann at the kitchen door.

"The flies!" said Katy, drawing her stout, red arms out of a wash-tub. "They're wasps, and they are chasin' ye, the mane craturs! Out wid ye!" shouted Katy to the invaders.

Through the kitchen, into the dining-room, across it, along the hall, and upstairs to grandma dear, raced the screaming children, the wasps in hot pursuit.

"O grandma!" cried Poppy, "they're killing us!"

"Why, children, what *is* the matter?" said grandma, whose peaceful face and white cap had just been bending over the family Bible and its picture of Jacob

and those angels on the ladder, like morning-glories on a vine.

"Sit down on the lounge and tell me what the matter is. Wasps, if I ever!"

Didn't grandma spring then?

"Oh, here comes Katy!" she said.

"Yes," cried Katy, swinging a broom in one hand, shaking a mop in the other, her eyes flashing like an express-locomotive's

light, "I'm jist a-goin' for 'em. I broom 'em, and then I mop 'em up and squaze 'em. Five quite dead in the kitchen. And here's bad luck to 'em up here!"

While Katy was raging like a tornado among the angry wasps, slaying in every direction, grandma was soothing the bitten arms and legs. There they were on the lounge in a row, eight bare little arms, and eight bare little legs also, for the wasps had put their needles through the children's stockings. Did they mean to darn any holes there?

When Major-General Katy had killed all the enemy with charges of broom and mop, grandma asked for an account of the accident. Then she said, "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

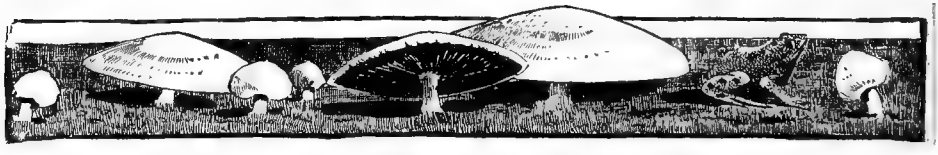
"Let's put them in a pail of hot water," said Poppy.

"Pail of hot water! No; drown 'em in the freezing, freezing ocean," said Patty, shaking her head.

"No, let's go up just as quietly as we can, and pull their stingers out," said Margery Ann, who belonged to a Band of Mercy, and did not want to kill them.

"No; I'll tell you," exclaimed grandma, and she looked wise as Moses in the Old Testament. "I wouldn't go near them. That is the best way for children to treat wasps, and a good many other things in this world. Don't go near them, and then you will never have trouble. I'll get Patrick to go out some day with a lot of sulphur, a bunch of hay, and some matches, and he will take care of them. The best way for you to manage wasps is to keep away from them."

Patty and Poppy and Fan and Margery Ann thought it was queer advice to such old children as they were. As they all lived in the city, and did not know much about the dangers of the country fields, grandma continued to look more and more like the wise Moses. They thought they would not again go near those "queer black and yellow flies."



BENJAMIN BEAVER, THE BUILDER.

WHAT queer little things beavers are! What strange houses they can build! They make a sort of cabin of branches of trees and mud. The mud answers nicely for mortar.

They have large, strong teeth. When they are cutting the branches for use they gnaw them off with their teeth. They make the sticks just as nearly the same length as they can. They dig up the mud with their paws, for they are great diggers. When they are ready to build their cabin they use their flat tails just as masons use a trowel. With it they spat and smooth the coat of mud as they put it on.

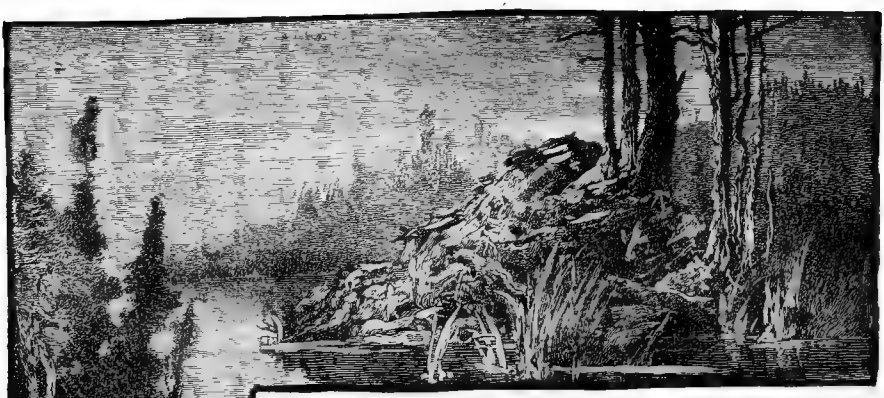
The beaver's tail is very short, and well adapted to this purpose. As the wall of the cabin rises higher it is hard for the builder to reach the top. What do you think he does? Why, he props himself up on it and goes on with his work.

These little creatures lead an idle sort of life during most of the summer months, and keep by themselves; but the last of August they form into companies and begin to cut down their timber.

The beavers always select a place for building close to a stream of water. To get to the entrance they must go down under the water. In order to keep the water over the doors just high enough they make a perfect dam. This dam is also built of branches and mud. For fear the branches might move and get out of place they fix stones upon them, sometimes of large size, to keep them down.

Do you see how they can understand all this? If they did not have a dam the door of the cabin might be closed up with ice if the water got low in the stream in winter.

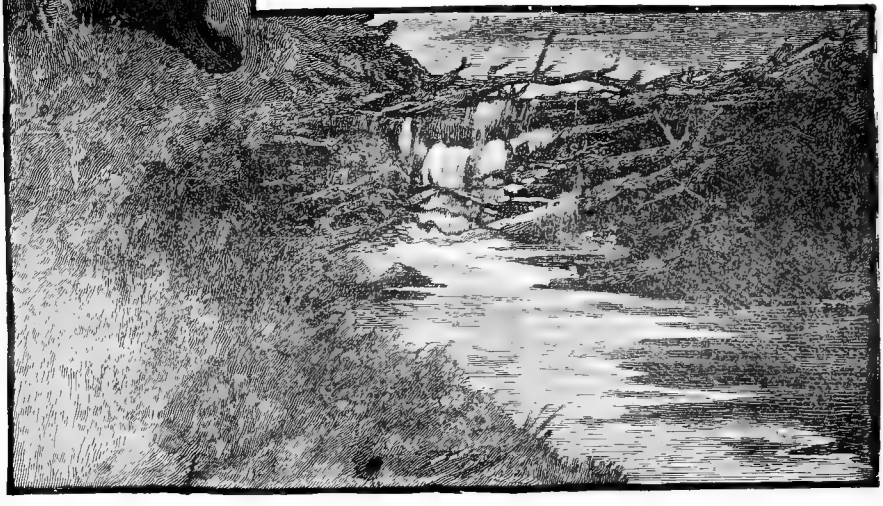
In this cabin there are two little rooms. They are shaped like an oven. The beavers live in the upper one, and in the lower they store away their food. They eat the roots and branches of differ-

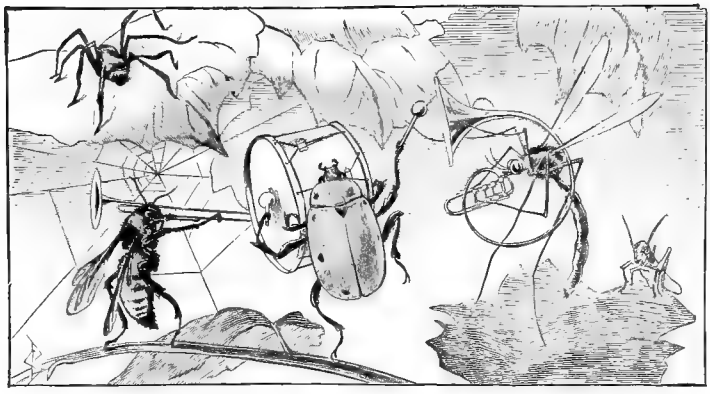


ent vegetables in the winter. They often lay up food in very large quantities.

This wonderful little animal is about three feet long. His tail is eleven inches long. He uses it as a rudder in swimming, as well as a trowel. This rudder, with his web feet, enables him to swim much faster than he can walk.

So you see that God gives to every creature certain tools to do his own work.





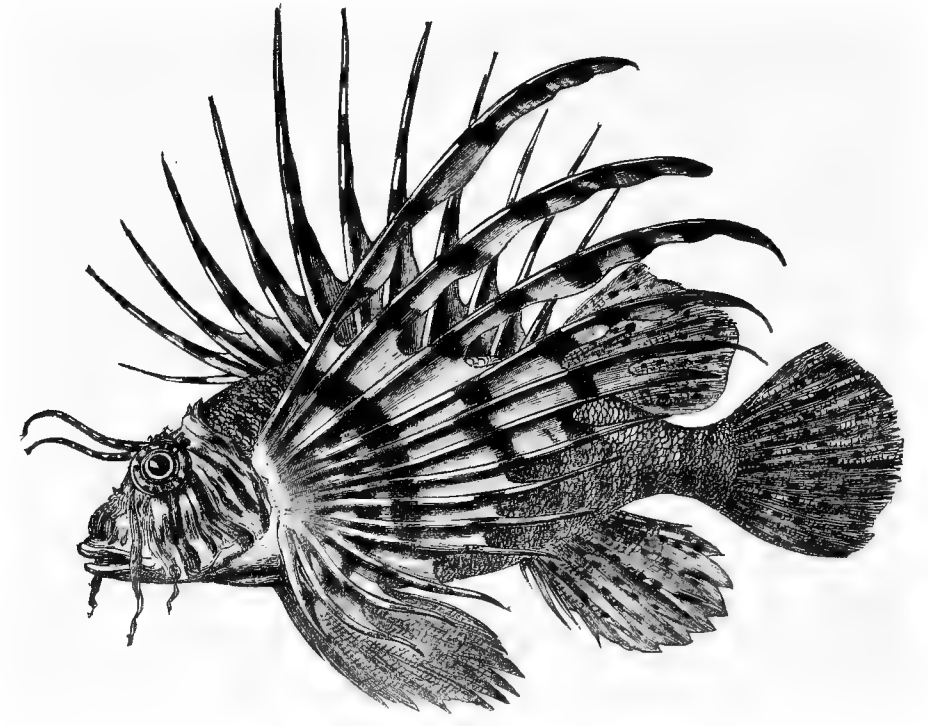
FIRE! FIRE!! FIRE!!!

WHERE is it? Where is it? Why, it is in the water! Isn't that funny? But you see it isn't a real fire, but only a fire-fish. Sweet creature, isn't he? Suppose you were a little, innocent mermaid, swimming alone for the first time; how would you feel if you were to meet this fellow darting towards you with his great red mouth open? Why, you would scream with fright, and swim to your mother as fast as you could, and catch hold of her tail for protection. At least that is what *I* should do if I were a mermaid. But Mrs. Mermaid would tell you that the fire-fish will not hurt you unless you hurt him first, in which case he will prick you dreadfully with his long, sharp spines.

I never see his picture without thinking of a red Indian in his war-paint and feathers. Perhaps — who knows? — perhaps when Indians are greedy, and eat too much fish, they may turn into fire-fish, and have to swim about forever under water, and never see a green forest again. If you are an Indian I advise you to be careful, my dear.

Nobody knows why this fish has such enormous wing-like fins. Wise men used to think that he could raise himself out of the water with them, like the flying-fish, but it is now proved that he cannot, and there seems to be no reason why a set of plain, small

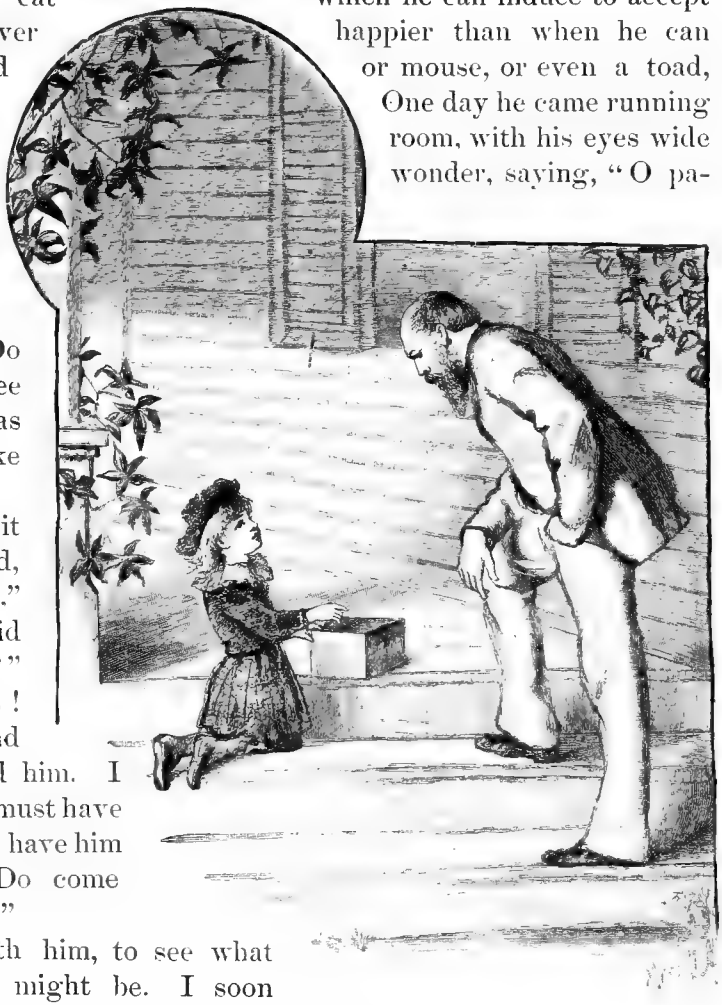
fins would not serve him just as well for swimming. He prefers warm water to cold, so he lives in the tropical seas, swimming about the coasts of India, Africa, and Australia. The natives of Ceylon call him Gini-maha, and they think he is very good to eat.



They take great care in catching him, for they are very much afraid of him, thinking that his sharp spines are poisoned, and can inflict a deadly wound. But in this they are too hard upon the poor fellow. He can prick them deeply and painfully, and he will if they meddle with him; but he is a perfectly respectable fish, and would not think of such a cowardly thing as poisoning anybody.

HARRY'S WINGED MOUSE.

LITTLE Harry is only four years old, yet he is very fond of all kinds of animals. He is always ready to share his food with any stray dog or cat which he can induce to accept it. He is never happier than when he can secure a bird or mouse, or even a toad, for a pet. One day he came running into my room, with his eyes wide open with wonder, saying, "O papa, I have found such a strange-looking mouse! Do come and see him. He has wings just like a bird."



"I think it must be a bird, if it has wings," I replied. "Did you catch it?"

"Oh, yes! He was dead when I found him. I think the cat must have killed him. I have him in a box. Do come and see him."

I went with him, to see what his new pet might be. I soon found that he was not so far from right as I had supposed. Lying in an old box was a little dead creature, very much like a mouse, but with large wings stretched out to their full length.

"Poor little mouse!" said Harry, kneeling by the box. "It has lost its tail; I think the cat must have bit it off."

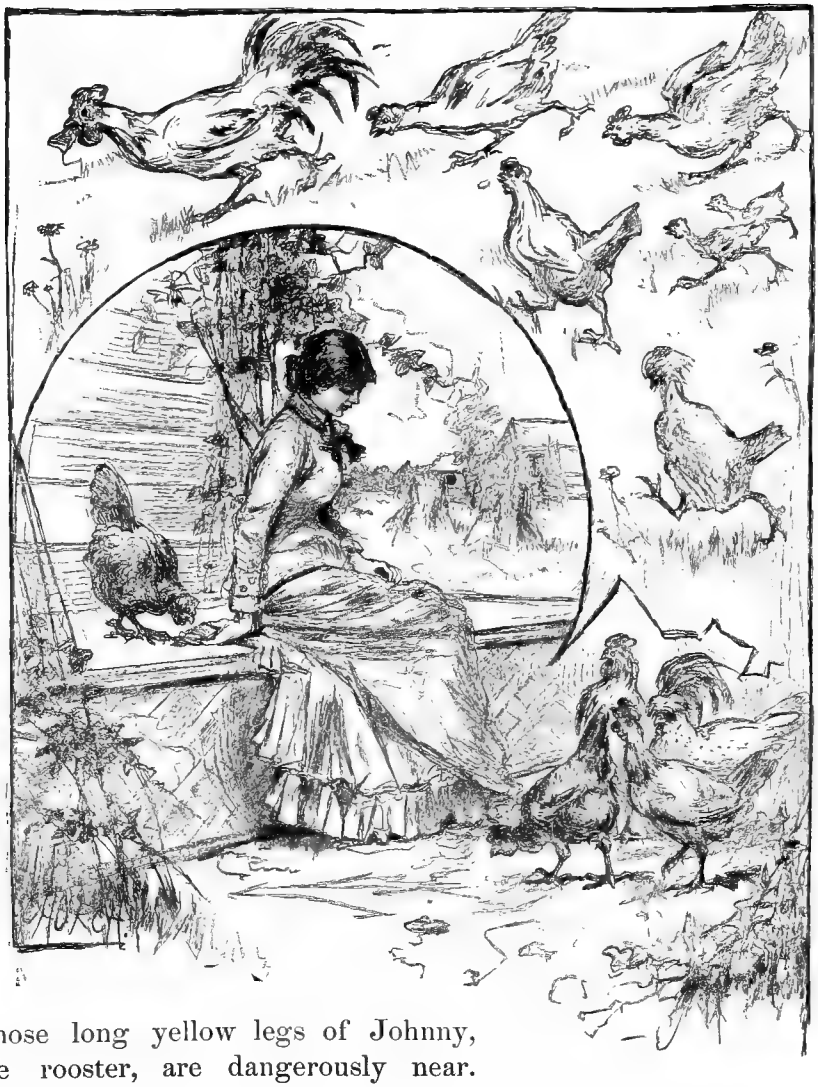
"I don't think he ever had a tail," said I. "This is not a mouse, as you suppose, but a bat. You never saw one before, and we will look at him, and see where he is not like a mouse. Then you will know a bat the next time you see one."

Harry was much pleased with what he learned. He often speaks of the bat he found, and is on the lookout for a live one. He would like to see anything so much like a mouse flying through the air like a bird.

WHO GOT THE CRUST?

You see, if I had stopped to finish my breakfast in the house, it would never have happened; but I wanted to speak to Thomas before he started for town, so I came out into the yard with a piece of toast in my hand. Now, when the hens saw me eating the toast they all came running towards me, expecting their breakfast. First came Johnny, the rooster; he always came first, because he was the greediest; then pretty Miss Brown came, with a scarlet comb in her hair; and after her came Speckle, and Cluckety, and Topknot, and all the rest of them. I sat down on the steps, meaning to break up the crust (for nothing more was left now) into tiny bits, and give them each a taste; but, while I was waiting for Topknot, who was lame, and could not run as fast as the others, to come up close, that impudent Miss Brown stole up behind me, snatched the crust from my hand, and made off with it. Oh! what a hue-and-cry arose then! "Cackle! Wackle!" "Craw! Craw! Craw!" "Cut-cut-ke-deh-cut!" Hurry-skurry, helter-skelter, off they all went after Miss Brown, bills open, feathers ruffled, eyes blinking with anger and envy.

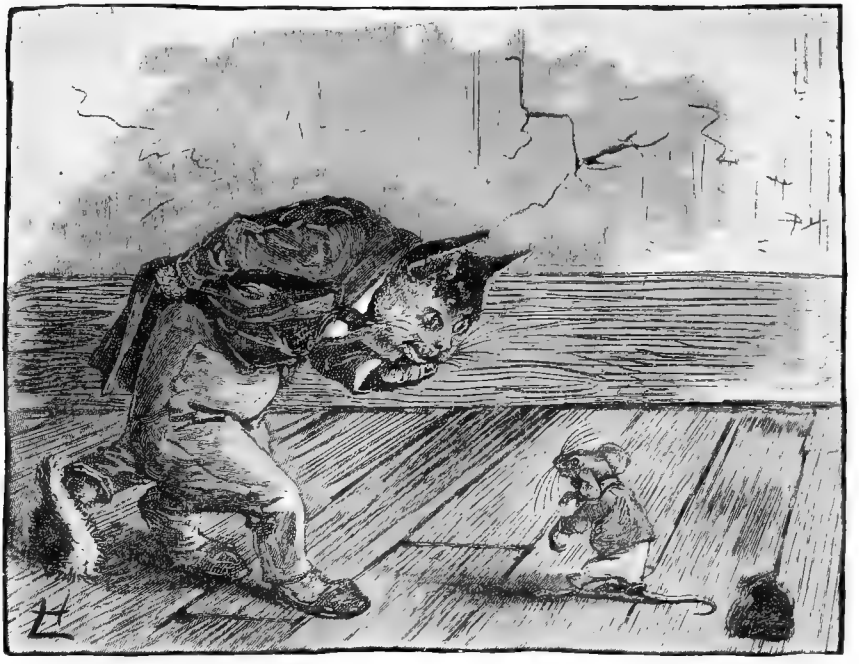
Run, Miss Brown, run as fast as your short legs will carry you.



Those long yellow legs of Johnny, the rooster, are dangerously near. Ah! Johnny has overtaken her, and snatched the crust from her bill. Off he goes in his turn, and off go Miss Brown, Speckle, Cluckety, Topknot, and the rest, after him. See! see! Speckle makes a peck at it; he has got it, and now the hunt is after *him*. Through the yard, round the house, into the hen-house

and out again, and finally round behind the barn and out of sight. I ran after them, determined to see who finally comes out victor in the strife. But, alas! when I come round behind the barn there is no crust, and no sign of there ever having been one. The hens are pecking about quietly, and Johnny, the rooster, is flapping his wings and preparing to crow. They look at me, and make some explanatory remarks, doubtless, relating to the strife and its result; but I cannot understand them. And now, alas! and alas! I shall never, *never* know who finally ate that crust of toast.

THE WISE OLD MOUSE.



A WISE old mouse went on tiptoe into the kitchen, to see if Jane had swept up all the crumbs. There, to his surprise, he met Buzz, the cat.

"Oho," cried the cat, "this is lucky! Now I shall have a fine dinner." The mouse saw that he was caught. So he said,

"Thank you, Mr. Buzz; but if I am to dine with you I should like first to put on my red Sunday coat. My old gray jacket is not nice enough."

This amused the cat. He had never seen the mouse with his red Sunday coat. "Perhaps he will taste better," thought he. "Very well, Mr. Mouse," he said, "do not be long, for I am hungry. I will wait for you here."

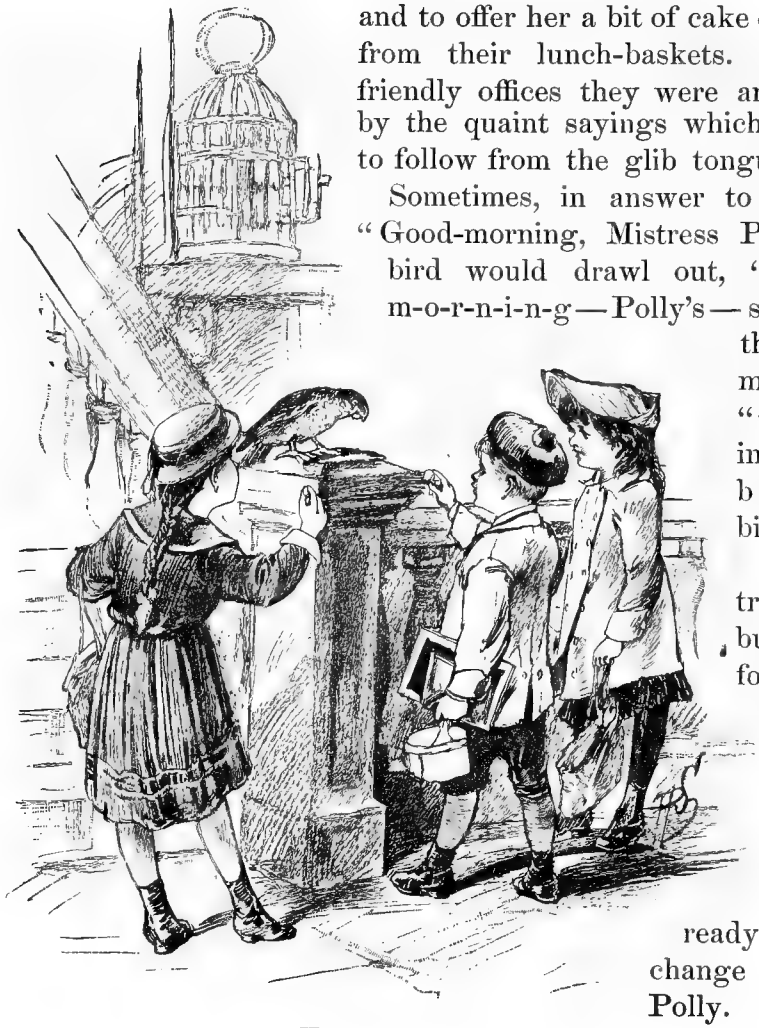
The mouse lost no time, but at once popped into his hole. The cat waited all day, softly singing to himself; but the wise old mouse did not come back.

Since then there is a new proverb in cat-land. It is this: "A mouse in a gray jacket is sweeter than a mouse in a red Sunday coat."

"POLLY WANTS TO GO TO DETROIT."

POLL PARROT belonged to a lady in Detroit. She lived in a great house on Woodward avenue.

Polly was a favorite. All the nice little children on the avenue knew and loved her. On their way to school they would stop to say, "Good-morning, Mistress Polly," and to offer her a bit of cake or a cracker from their lunch-baskets. For these friendly offices they were amply repaid by the quaint sayings which were sure to follow from the glib tongue of Polly.



Sometimes, in answer to a cheerful "Good-morning, Mistress Polly!" the bird would drawl out, "G-o-o-d — m-o-r-n-i-n-g — Polly's — sleepy." For the next it might be, "Good morning, — don't bother a bird."

Polly's mistress lost the bulk of her fortune, and went to live in another city.

When she was ready to move, a change came over Polly. She grew moody and silent. To her little friends' greetings she would scarce deign a reply.

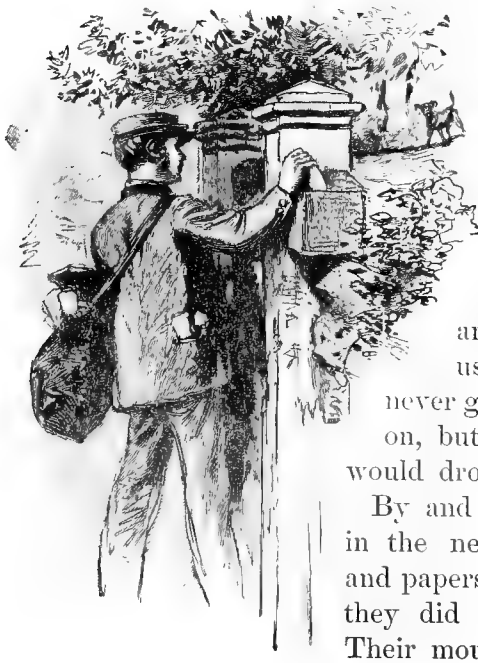
At her new home her mood changed, but, alas! not for the better. She now complained all the time; and the burden of her cry was ever the same: "Polly wants to go to Detroit; poor Polly wants to go to Detroit!"

So sad was the bird's moan that a lady who lived across the street had to close the front doors and windows of her house and retire to the rear, that she might not hear it.

For fourteen days the poor creature sent forth her pitiful wail. She refused food, and died with the half-finished petition upon her tongue: "Poor Polly wants to go" —

THE NEST IN THE MAIL-BOX.

We had to fasten a box for our mail on the gate-post, because the postman is afraid of our dog, and will not come into the yard. Last summer two little blue-birds made a pretty nest right in that box.



The mamma bird laid five tiny eggs, and sat on them, letting the postman drop the letters on her. Every morning and evening the news-boy put in the paper.

Papa bird brought her worms, and mamma, my sister, and I used to watch him. He would never go into the box while we looked on, but when we walked away he would drop down quick as a flash.

By and by there were five little birds in the nest. We thought the letters and papers would surely kill them. But they did not; the birds grew finely. Their mouths were always wide open.

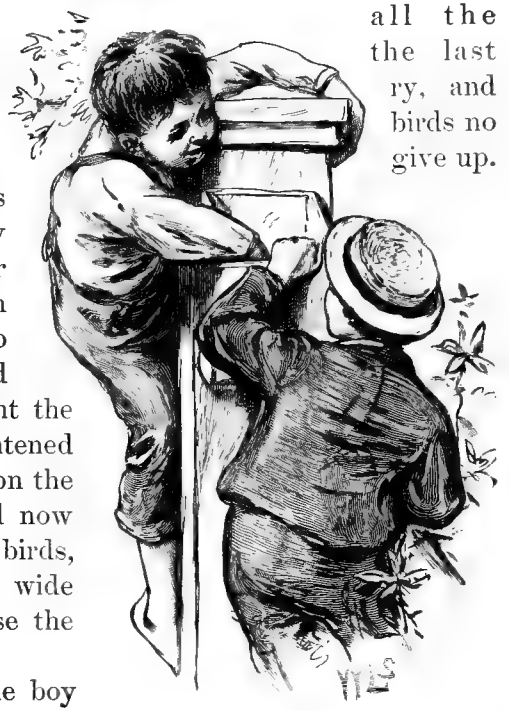
One day I put some fine crumbs in the nest, thinking they would like to eat them. I wish you could have seen the mamma bird. She flew round and round, acting as if crazy. Finally she began taking out the tiny crumbs one by one, until the last one was thrown away. I had seen pictures of children feeding crumbs to birds, and I thought it the right thing to do. But surely it was not the food these birds needed. For several weeks we watched them, and saw them grow.

We wanted to see the mamma teach them to fly. But they all left suddenly. The nest was empty one day, and we could never tell our birds from the others in the yard. I brought the nest into the house and kept it all winter. We wondered if we should see the little birds again the next year.

At the opening of spring we watched closely, and, sure enough, the bluebirds did come again, and built a nest in the same box. This time they made a better foundation, raised the nest higher up, lined it with horse-hair, and put it in one corner of the box. Then the mamma bird laid five little eggs, and we and they were happy.

One day we missed an egg. The

next day another was gone, and then another, until only one was left. We found that some bad boys had discovered the nest and were stealing all the eggs. Finally the boys took the last one; then we felt so sorry, and thought we should see the birds no more. But they did not give up. They at once tore to pieces the old nest, and built a new one in another corner. Four more little eggs were laid in it. The bad boys took two of those out. Then papa and I locked the box. I thought the mamma bird might be so frightened she would not want to stay on the nest. But she did stay; and now we have two little baby birds, which open their mouths wide and squirm whenever we raise the cover of the box.



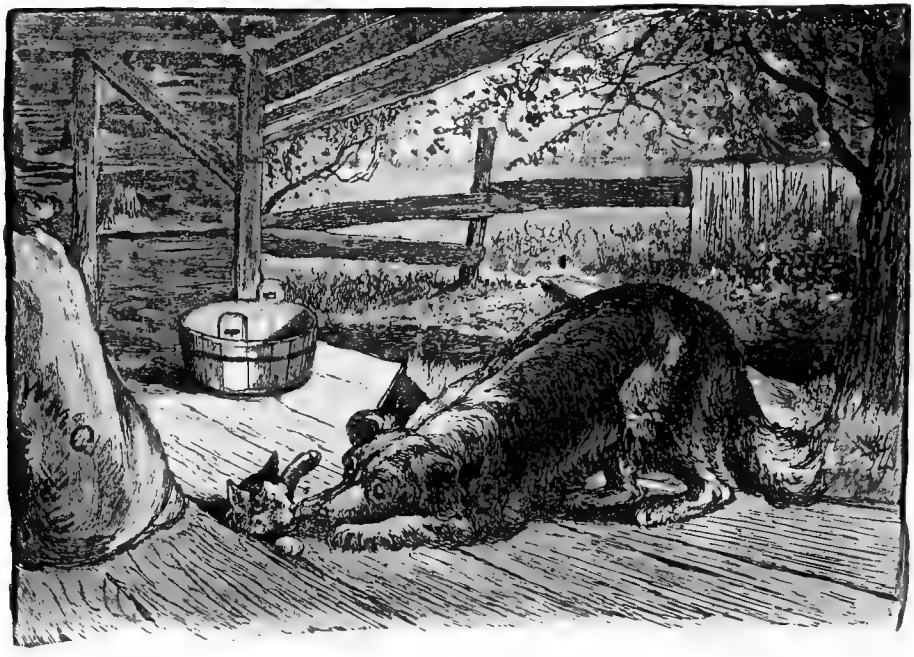
I wonder if any other little boy has such pretty pets.

DUKE AND THE KITTEN.

Duke was a large black and white dog. He had long, silky ears and large, bright eyes. When he was a pup he was so full of mischief that his mistress used to say, "We really shall have to send Duke away; we cannot have any peace of our lives while he stays here." But somehow Duke was never sent off. Every one thought too much of him. Even his mistress, although she scolded him, would have been sorry to have him go.

Duke was very fond of a little yellow kitten, and the kitten was fond of him. Although Duke teased the kitten he was very careful not to hurt it, and they had some lively times together.

They used to play hide-and-seek together. The kitten would run under an ottoman, which came so close to the floor that there



was just room for her to get under. Duke would lie down and put his head close to the floor. The kitten would stick out its yellow paw, and Duke would try to catch it; after a while the kitten would run out, and they would play up and down the walks.

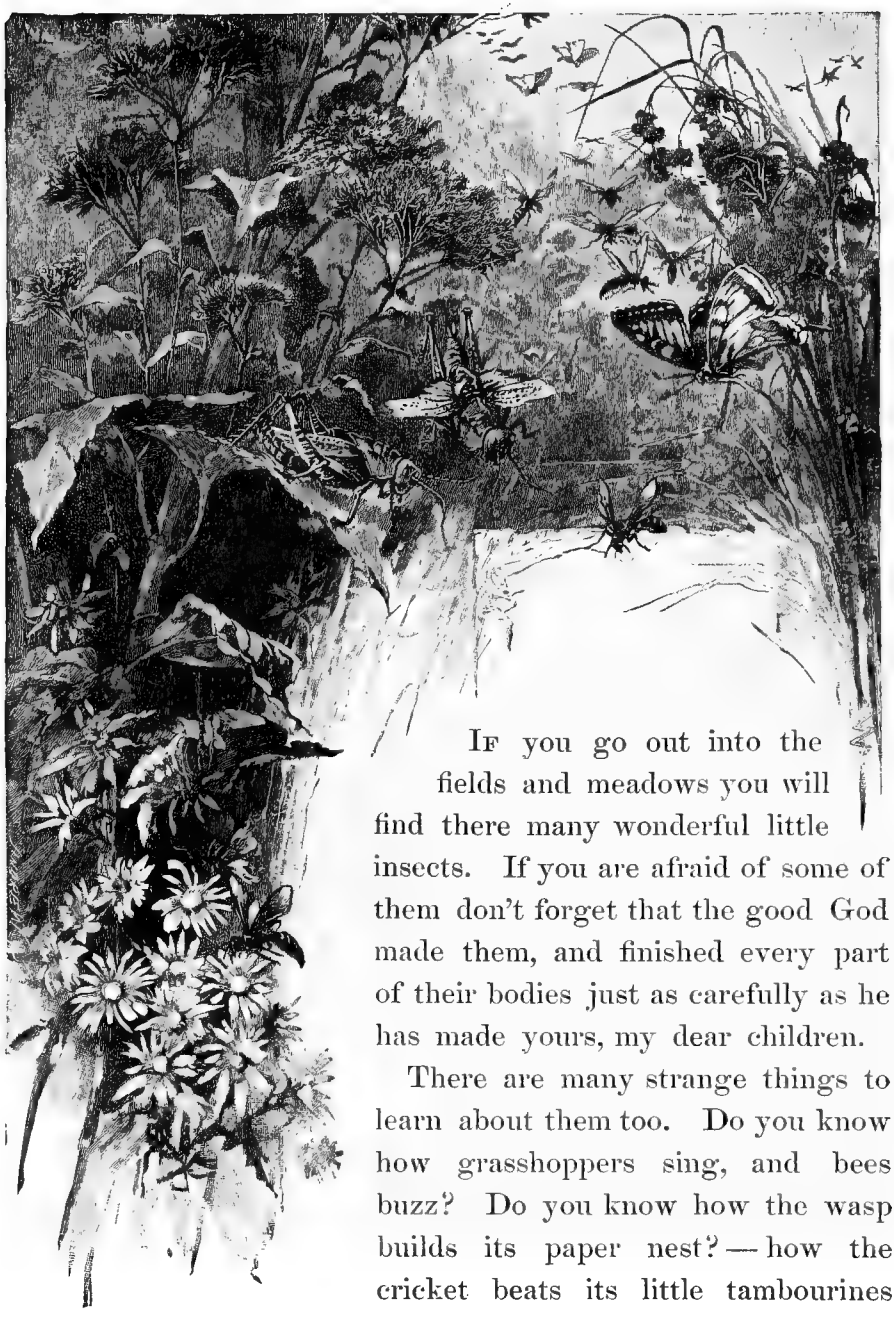
Sometimes the kitten would run under the porch and put its paw up through a hole in the floor. Duke would come and put his paw on it; then the kitten would put its head up. Duke would take its head in his big mouth, pull it up through the hole, and carry it around the garden. They both seemed to think it fun.

A GOOSE FLYING A KITE.

Not long ago some little boys were flying small paper kites. They were made of newspaper, about as big as your hand, with straws stuck through for sticks.

A flock of tame geese came waddling along, picking up stray grains of corn. One of the boys took a grain and tied his kite-string firmly to it. An old gray goose, a little behind the rest, with her neck stuck out as far as possible, made a grab for the corn. She got it, but found she had the kite, too.

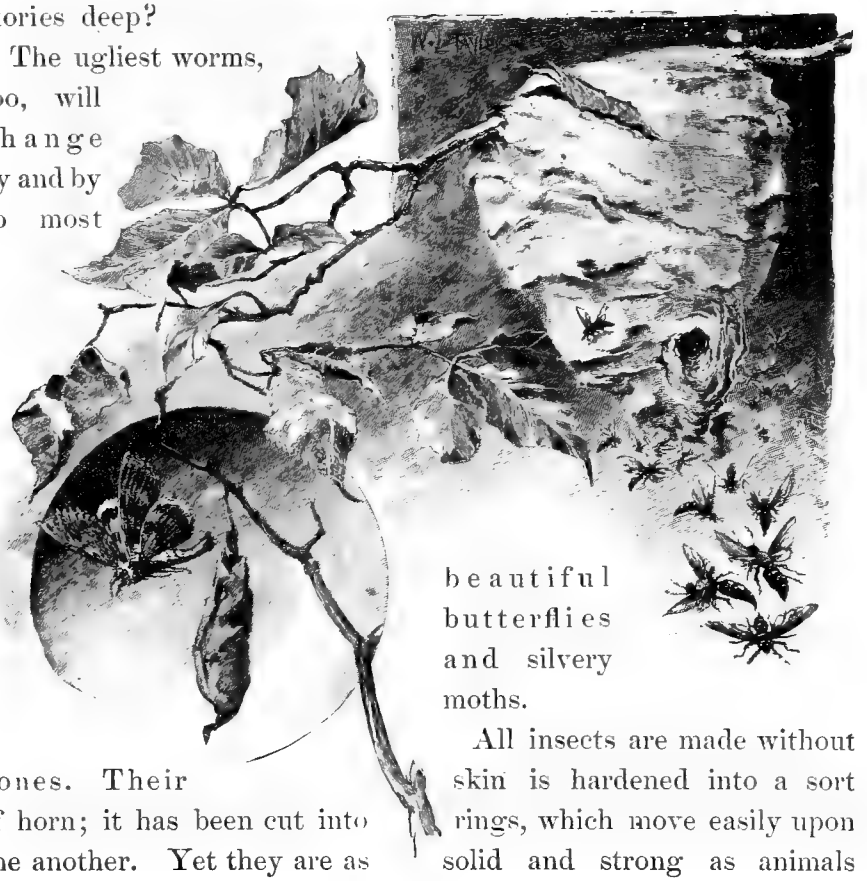
Off she started, — "Quack, quack, quack!" — with the kite flying up above her head and her wings flapping all the while. It frightened the rest of the geese, and such a quacking and flapping as they made! The boys raced after them, and thought it fine fun to see an old goose flying a kite.



If you go out into the fields and meadows you will find there many wonderful little insects. If you are afraid of some of them don't forget that the good God made them, and finished every part of their bodies just as carefully as he has made yours, my dear children.

There are many strange things to learn about them too. Do you know how grasshoppers sing, and bees buzz? Do you know how the wasp builds its paper nest? — how the cricket beats its little tambourines

all night long? — or how the tiny ant builds such wonderful houses, some of them many stories deep?



The ugliest worms, too, will change by and by to most beautiful butterflies and silvery moths.

All insects are made without bones. Their skin is hardened into a sort of horn; it has been cut into rings, which move easily upon one another. Yet they are as solid and strong as animals which have a great many bones.

Instead of lungs and blood-vessels, like ours, they have curious little breathing-places all along their sides. They have small air veins, which are filled from these and make the whole body light.

HOW THE WONDERS SEE AND HEAR.

HAVE you ever noticed the long horns on the grasshoppers, beetles, and the like? These are antennæ, or feelers. They turn every way, and are what they hear with, — that is, it seems so. If you watch some of them when they hear a noise you will see them stretch out these feelers. They keep them motionless, as if they were listening. When the noise is over they will move them about carelessly again.

The eyes of insects are wonderful things; they have many in one. Under a glass they seem just like paved streets.

These strange eyes do not help them to see at a distance, but they are very useful when the insects go inside of flowers.

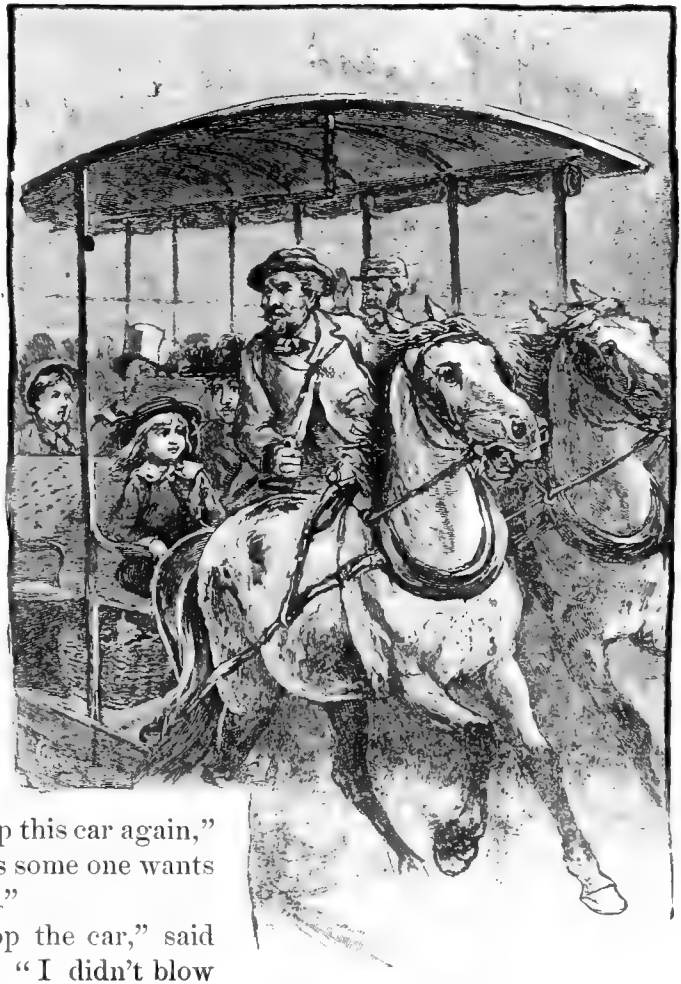
To a fly everything must look very rich, for one rose may appear to him like ten thousand, and one drop of honey like ten thousand drops.

Now, if a man were made without bones, breathing out of his sides, with a head almost all eyes, wouldn't he be a funny-looking object?

A QUEER CONDUCTOR.

Little Eddie Howard liked to ride in the open horse-cars, and his mother used to take him out of town almost every day when it was hot in the city.

One day, as they were riding along, the whistle blew and the car stopped. The driver looked round, but no one wanted to get out. "Why did you blow your whistle?" he said to the conductor.



"I didn't whistle," said the conductor; and the car went on again.

Pretty soon the whistle sounded again, and the driver stopped the car again. But no one wanted to get out. The driver was angry. "Don't you dare to stop this car again," he said, "unless some one wants to get out of it."

"I didn't stop the car," said the conductor. "I didn't blow the whistle once."

"Well, somebody did," said the driver.

"I don't know who it was," said the conductor.

The car went on again. Pretty soon the whistle sounded a third time. Little Eddie Howard was sitting near the conductor. "He didn't blow it," he said to his mother, "for I was looking at his mouth all the time." The driver was very cross by that time.

"Hurry up! hurry up! hurry up!" was the next thing they heard.

"Look here, young man!" cried the enraged driver, turning round; "if you think I'm going to" —

"Oh!" screamed a nervous old lady. "It's somebody under the seat! Thieves! Murder!"

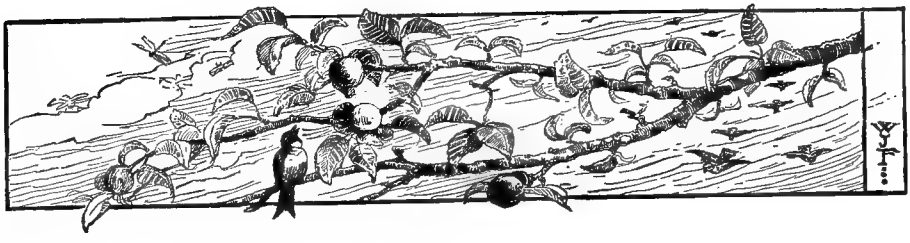
"Will you hurry up?" said the same voice again, and this time it certainly did come from under the seat.

The ladies rose in alarm, but just then a gentleman came forward from the back platform. "I fear my Jacko is giving trouble," he said, smiling; and then he pulled from under the seat a basket in which sat a large green parrot. The parrot cocked his head on one side and winked at his master, and then began to whistle. "Whew!" he said. "Whew! whew! *will* you hurry up?"

Then the driver laughed, and the conductor laughed, and everybody laughed; and with a jingle and a jerk the car went on.

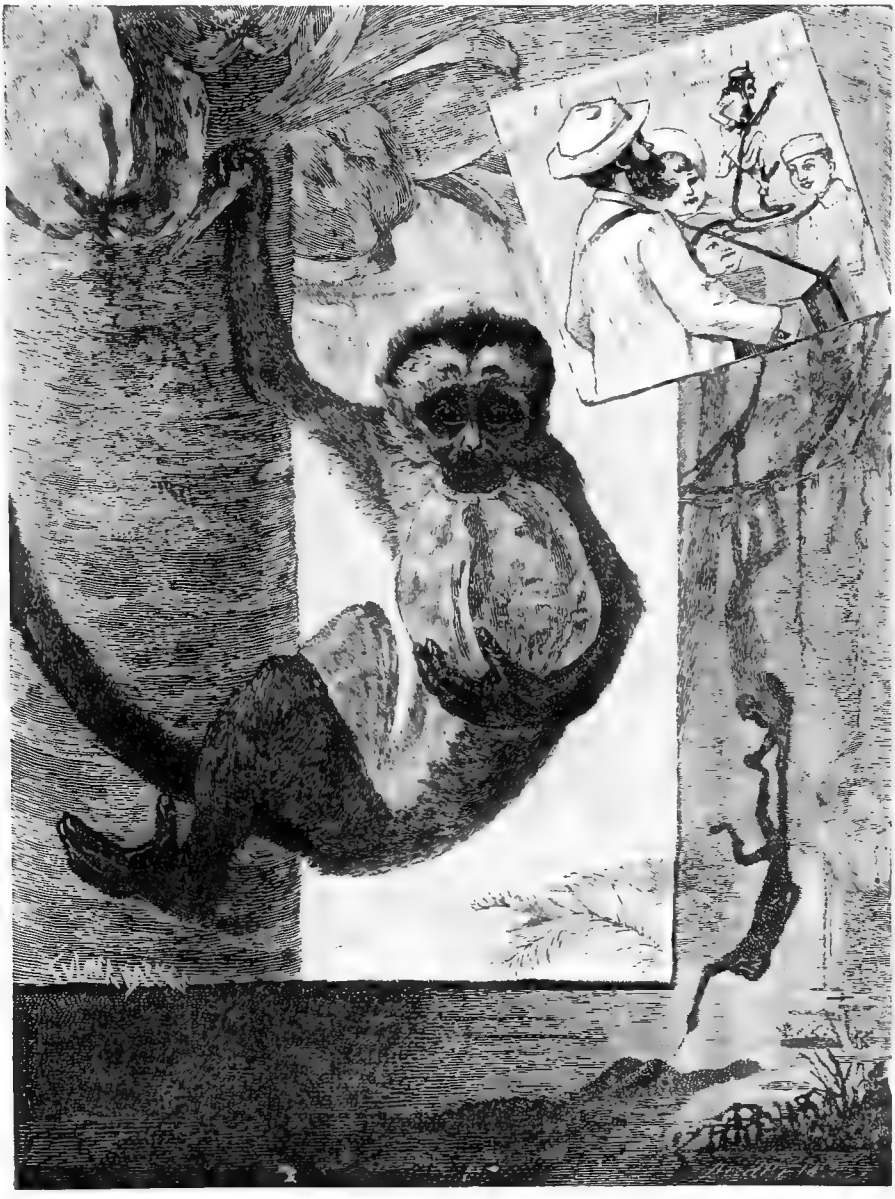
"Well, we had a queer conductor this trip," said the driver, when the conductor next came forward. "I think you had better resign, and give the parrot your place."

"I think so, too," replied the conductor, "for you minded him a great deal better than you mind me!"



THE MONKEY'S STORY.

My name is Mingo. I had a sister named Chippy. We were born in South America. We are called spider monkeys, and we



all have beautiful long tails. Chippy and I lived in a cocoanut-tree. We were very happy. We did nothing but play, and eat, and sleep. We chattered all the time in a very loving manner, and never quarrelled. I was always kind to Chippy, and she never scratched and bit. That was what made our home so happy. We were both good monkeys, and father and mother loved us.

Such fine times as we did have! Awake bright and early, we washed our faces, and took a drink of cocoanut-milk. It was very nice. Then we hunted for birds'-eggs for breakfast, or perhaps caught some tender beetles or dragon-flies. After that we spent our days in playing hide-and-seek among the branches of the trees, or teased the lazy crocodiles, basking in the sun by the river-side. But we never strayed far from home, for our parents had warned us not to do so, for fear of cruel men. One day, when father and mother had gone out to walk, we heard strange sounds near us. Stealing to an open space, Chippy and I saw a company of men gazing up at us. We started to run away, but it was too late. I felt something around my neck like a snake. I soon found that one of the men had thrown a rope over me, and I was captured.

What became of Chippy I do not know. I have never seen her since. I can just remember being placed in a dark box, in which I was kept prisoner for many long days and nights. When I was set at liberty I was upon a ship, with water all around me. I was sold to my present master, and by him, after many beatings, I was taught the little tricks which please the boys and girls. They seem very silly to me now.

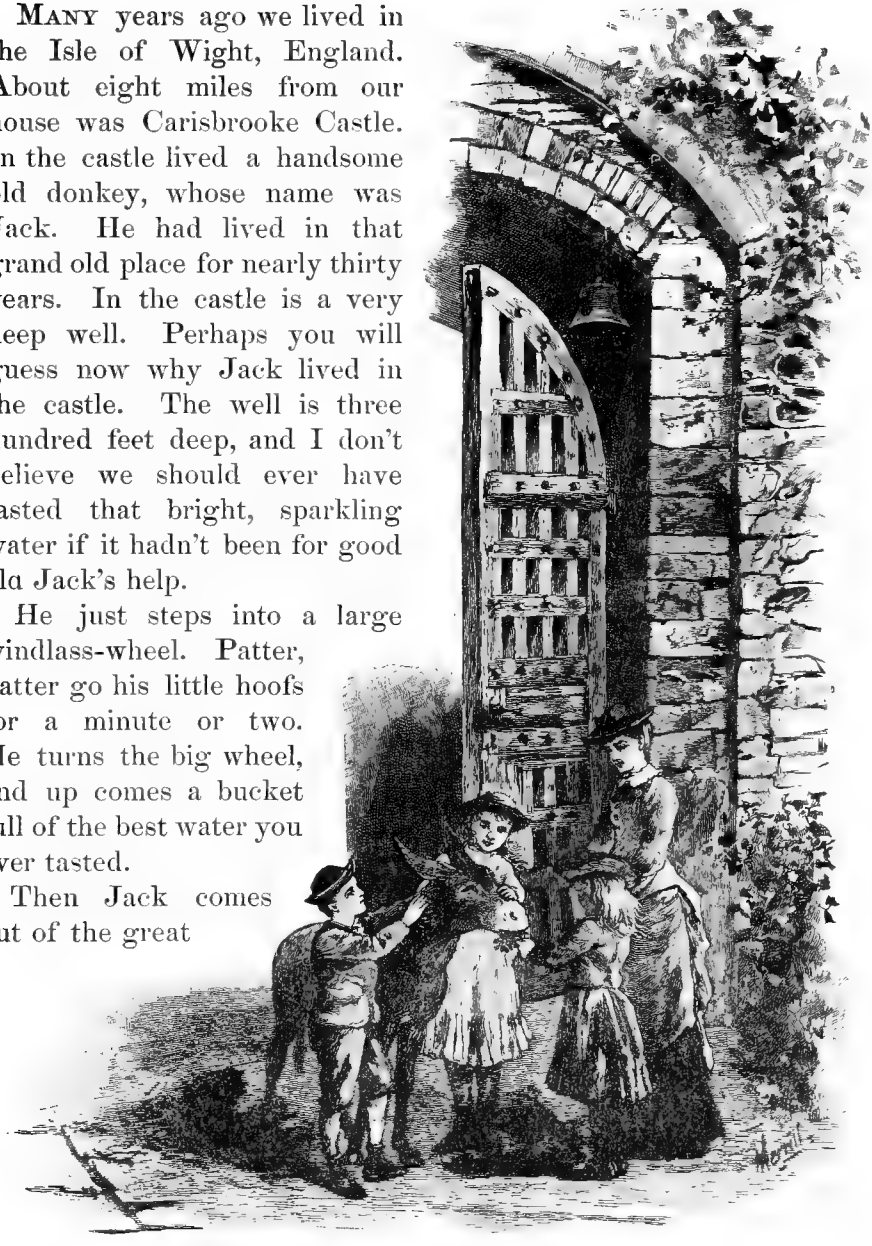
During the long, hot summer days we tramp over dusty roads, and play the same tiresome tunes and perform the same tricks. Sometimes we have a good day, and then I get a crust of bread or a bun for supper. Often the days are bad, and I go to bed hungry and dream of the happy days in the cocoanut-grove by the Amazon.

THE DONKEY THAT LIVES IN A CASTLE.

MANY years ago we lived in the Isle of Wight, England. About eight miles from our house was Carisbrooke Castle. In the castle lived a handsome old donkey, whose name was Jack. He had lived in that grand old place for nearly thirty years. In the castle is a very deep well. Perhaps you will guess now why Jack lived in the castle. The well is three hundred feet deep, and I don't believe we should ever have tasted that bright, sparkling water if it hadn't been for good old Jack's help.

He just steps into a large windlass-wheel. Patter, patter go his little hoofs for a minute or two. He turns the big wheel, and up comes a bucket full of the best water you ever tasted.

Then Jack comes out of the great



wheel. The children all gather around and pat and pet him. We feed him with the cakes and apples or bunches of water-cresses brought on purpose for "dear old Jack."

No wonder the "well-donkeys" are fat and jolly, and live to be old. The well-keeper told us that one had lived to be fifty years old, and another forty years. I shouldn't wonder if our friend Jack lived as long as any of them.

In summer a great many visitors go to see this famous old building, with its deep well, and the famous old donkey that lives in a castle.

A BEER-DRINKING SHEEP.

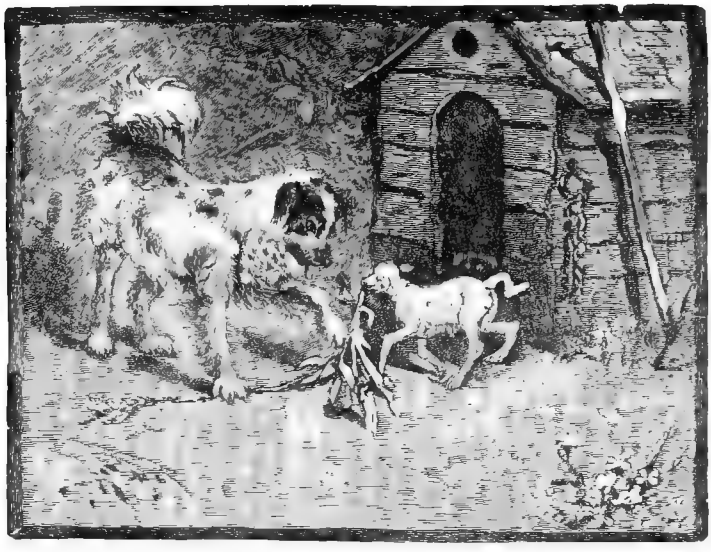
SCHAAP is a South African sheep; and a beautiful fellow he is, with a fine, silky fleece, and long, curling horns. When he was a little lamb he left his mother and wandered away from the flock. He would certainly have been lost, but Mr. Watson, who is the magistrate at Matatiele, found him and took him home.

Mr. Watson's dog, Beauty, had three or four puppies at that time, and she took the poor little, lost lamb into her family. It was such a pretty sight to see her cuddling and petting Schaap, just as if he were her own!

But when the lamb grew to be a sheep he became so fond of Mr. Watson that he would not sleep anywhere but in his house. There he lay curled up on the mat outside Mr. Watson's bedroom

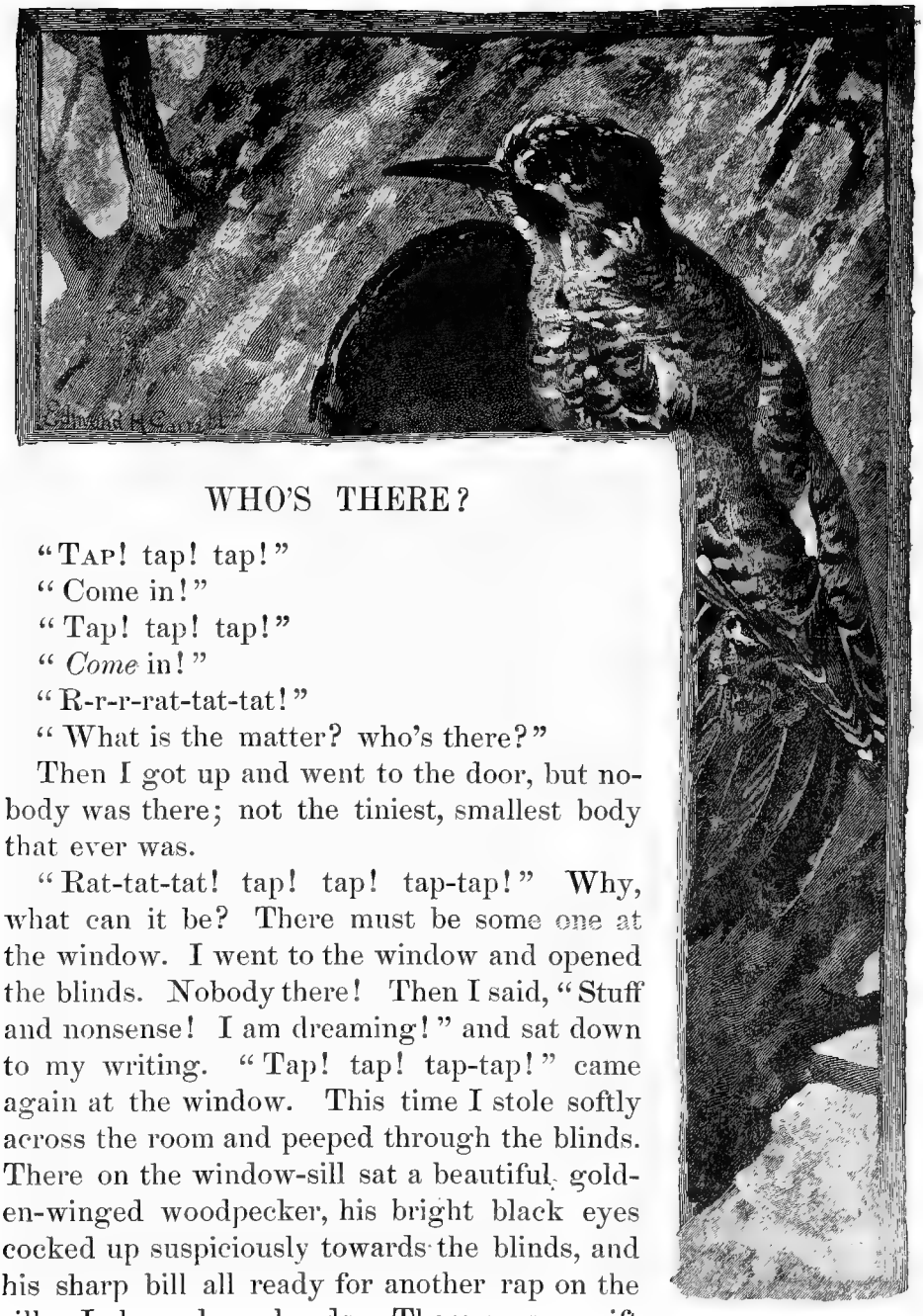
door, — a brave watch-*dog*, with horns ready to butt any one who dared to disturb his master.

But the funniest thing about Schaap was, that as soon as the dinner-bell rang he always started for the head of the table.



When Mr. Watson sat down, this saucy fellow behind his chair put his fore paws on his shoulders, just to remind him that he wanted his dinner. He would not touch grass or hay, but was very fond of mutton, soap, and candles. He drank coffee and tea, if there were plenty of sugar and cream in it, with a great relish. I am sorry to say Schaap was more fond of draught beer than of anything else. He lifted the can up with his front paws and held it to his mouth until every drop was gone.

They say he was very wicked. I don't wonder, if he was such a lover of strong drink. All day he was running about, not with the sheep, but with the dogs, and following his master, until the bell rang for dinner, and for Schaap's tankard of ale.



WHO'S THERE?

"TAP! tap! tap!"

"Come in!"

"Tap! tap! tap!"

"*Come* in!"

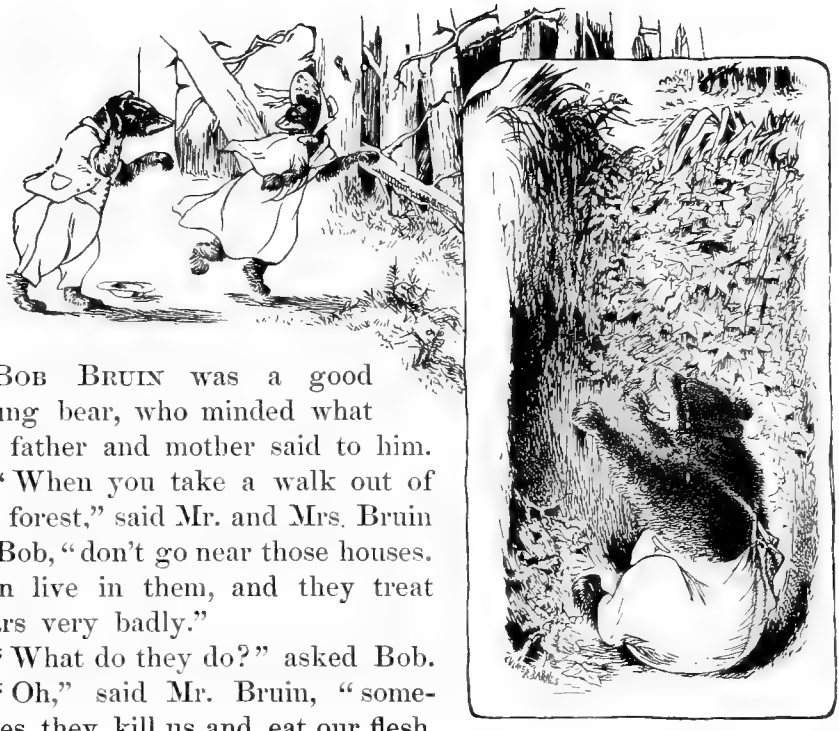
"R-r-r-rat-tat-tat!"

"What is the matter? who's there?"

Then I got up and went to the door, but nobody was there; not the tiniest, smallest body that ever was.

"Rat-tat-tat! tap! tap! tap-tap!" Why, what can it be? There must be some one at the window. I went to the window and opened the blinds. Nobody there! Then I said, "Stuff and nonsense! I am dreaming!" and sat down to my writing. "Tap! tap! tap-tap!" came again at the window. This time I stole softly across the room and peeped through the blinds. There on the window-sill sat a beautiful golden-winged woodpecker, his bright black eyes cocked up suspiciously towards the blinds, and his sharp bill all ready for another rap on the sill. I clapped my hands. There was a swift whirr! a flash of flame, and off went the mischievous beauty, to tap, tap, tap, at my neighbor's window.

HOW THE BEARS HELPED ONE ANOTHER.



Bob Bruin was a good young bear, who minded what his father and mother said to him.

"When you take a walk out of the forest," said Mr. and Mrs. Bruin to Bob, "don't go near those houses. Men live in them, and they treat bears very badly."

"What do they do?" asked Bob.

"Oh," said Mr. Bruin, "sometimes they kill us and eat our flesh. Sometimes they tie a great log to our legs, so that we cannot run."

"Ah!" said Bob, "but I would bite them."

"To prevent that they will tie a great muzzle on your mouth; so keep away from them, Bob."

Bob promised to obey. But one day, while walking outside the wood, he fell into a pit. He roared so loud that Mr. and Mrs. Bruin came running to see what was the matter. When they came to the pit they saw some nuts, and fruit, and buns, lying on the grass. So they made a step forward to get these nice things, when down they went into the pit where Bob was, with the buns and nuts.

They then found that the food had been laid on twigs and leaves across the pit, which was dug as a trap for them to fall into. But how to get out was the puzzle.

After a little while Mrs. Bruin got on top of Mr. Bruin's shoulders, and so scrambled out of the pit."

"Now, Bob, you do the same, and I'll tell you how you may then help me out."

So Bob got out of the pit as his mother had done.

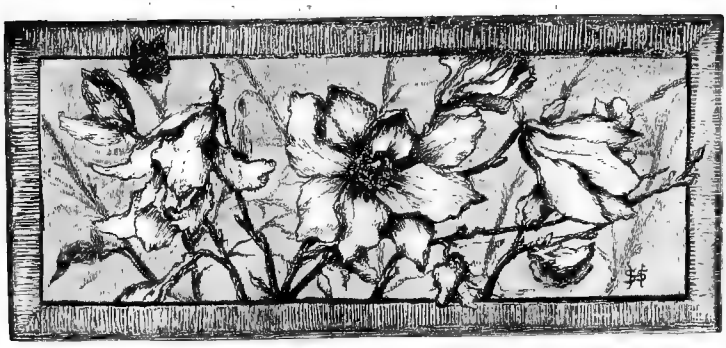
"Now," said Mr. Bruin, "go to the woods and bring back a

stout branch of a tree." They did so, and placed the end at the bottom of the pit.

"Now hold the end tight at the top," said Mr. Bruin, "and I'll try to climb up."

So Bob and Mrs. Bruin held the branch at the top of the pit, and Mr. Bruin, who could climb very well, managed to scramble out of the pit.

They all went home again to the forest in safety, and had a long talk about men, and their tricks to catch poor bears in pits.



A MOUSE THAT LIVES IN THE MUD.

A MOUSE, my children! A mouse with no particular head, and no particular feet, and no particular tail. A mouse that does not know the taste of cheese, and that never saw a mouse-trap; a mouse that cannot squeak, and that actually lays eggs! How the little brown fellow, whom you hear scampering and squeaking in the wall, would open his bright black eyes if he were to hear of such a mouse as this.

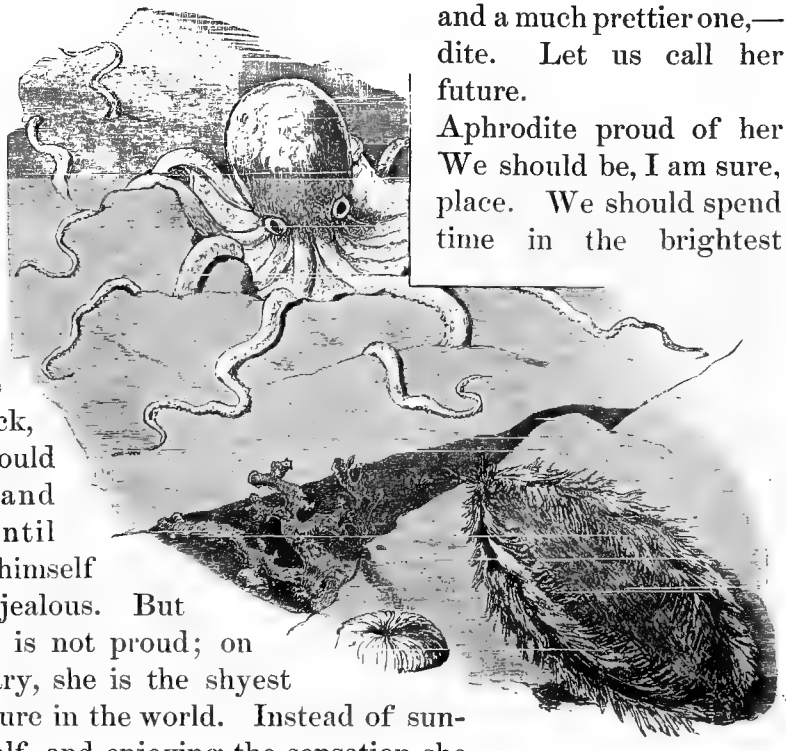
"That creature a mouse?" he would say. "Where is its long, beautiful tail? Where is its sharp nose, and its pretty white teeth, and its four trim little feet, with their dainty claws? Pooh! I don't believe it's a mouse at all!"

Between you and me, my dears, the little brown fellow is right, and this strange creature is not really a mouse; but that is what it is called, — the sea-mouse.

Brownie might well be proud, however, if he could claim it as his cousin, for it is one of the most beautiful creatures in the world. This little lady in the picture now, — you see nothing beautiful in her, for she is drawn in plain black and white; but if you were to see her as she really is, your eyes would be fairly dazzled by her brilliant beauty. Her long, oval body is covered with a thick coat of hair, and every single hair in this coat is a tiny bit of living rainbow, flashing back the light in a thousand many-colored rays.

Rubies, emeralds, sapphires, topazes, diamonds, amethysts, opals, — take a handful of each, mix them altogether, and toss them up in the sunlight at noon when the sun is brightest; then you may have some idea of the sparkling beauty of this little sea-mouse, which creeps so quietly about in the mud at the bottom of the sea.

By the way, she has another name besides sea-mouse, and a much prettier one,— Aphrodite. Let us call her that in future.



Now, Aphrodite proud of her beauty? We should be, I am sure, in her place. We should spend all our time in the brightest sunshine we could find, on top of the biggest rock, and we should sparkle and sparkle until the sun himself would be jealous. But Aphrodite is not proud; on the contrary, she is the shyest little creature in the world. Instead of sunning herself, and enjoying the sensation she creates, her one desire is to keep out of the way. Burrowing into the mud, hiding under stones or in empty shells, wrapping herself up in a sea-weed mantle, she seems to be constantly saying: —

"Oh! don't, I beg of you, take the trouble to look at *me!* I am only four inches long, and I haven't any head worth mentioning. You really embarrass me by staring; and there are so many creatures all around here that are really worth looking at. See that great octopus over there, who is trying so hard to attract your attention. Go and look at him, like good people! He is fifty times

as big as I am, and he likes to be stared at, and can stare back again."

Humph! *I* don't want to look at the octopus now, do you? Ugly thing! We will see him some day, however. But now I really must stir up Miss Aphrodite, and let you see how she walks.

You see those bunches of bristles on each side of her flat body? Well, she walks—if you can call it walking—with those. She does not get about very fast, but there is no need of that, for she has plenty of time, and is never in a hurry. Another queer thing about her is the way in which she breathes. You see she lives in the mud a great deal, and yet she does not want to breathe mud; so, under her beautiful rainbow cloak of hair, she has another coat of something that looks like felt. This felt coat catches and holds the mud, and does not let any of it pass through; so that the scale-like gills underneath, through which she breathes, get nothing but clear, good water. I am very sorry to be obliged to say that Aphrodite is extremely greedy, but it is the melancholy truth. There is no end to her appetite; and I am afraid that if she were very hungry she would not hesitate to eat her own grandmother. Isn't that shocking?

NOBODY'S CAT.

She ought to have been "Somebody's Cat," for she was a pretty creature, with jet-black coat, white hood and cape, and long white mittens. But nobody owned her, nobody cared for her; and so she came to live in my garden. I could not take her into the house, because Tommo, my great yellow cat, would have eaten her up; but I fed her every morning from the dining-room window. The moment I opened the window up popped the white head, with an eager "Mi-au-ow!" and poor pussy was always so very hungry that I was sure nobody else fed her. She slept at night curled up among the dry leaves at the foot of the elm tree. On cold mornings she used to sit huddled in a pile of leaves until Susan came out to sift the ashes; then, the moment Susan was

gone, she jumped into the ash-bin, and sat on the hot ashes to warm her cold toes. Sometimes I would hear a piteous squeal, and then I knew she had burned her poor, cold toes; but she only jumped on the edge of the bin, and waited a few minutes till the ashes were cool enough to sit on comfortably, and then went back to them. One day I found her playing with a mouse, and after that she caught mice every day, and in this way helped me a great deal, for my fine Master Tommo was too lazy to catch anything, except a bumble-bee when it alighted on his nose. So, after all, Nobody's Cat was useful to Somebody, while Somebody's Cat was useful to Nobody.

CLEVER MRS. PARTRIDGE.

WALTER was walking in the woods with his father. Suddenly a partridge flew up near them, and lighted almost at their feet.

She acted very strangely, bristling up her feathers, and running first towards Walter, and then from him, but dodging so that the boy could not catch her.

When Walter walked the bird went slowly, and when he ran she would go just fast enough to keep out of his reach, and at the same time lead him on. They went in this way for some distance, when the partridge rose in the air and flew out of sight.

"Why did she act so strangely?" asked Walter, as he returned to the place where his father was standing. "I thought she must be wounded, so she could not fly; but she went fast enough when she got ready."

"This would answer your question if you knew her ways," said the father, as he showed Walter a tiny partridge which he was holding in his hand.

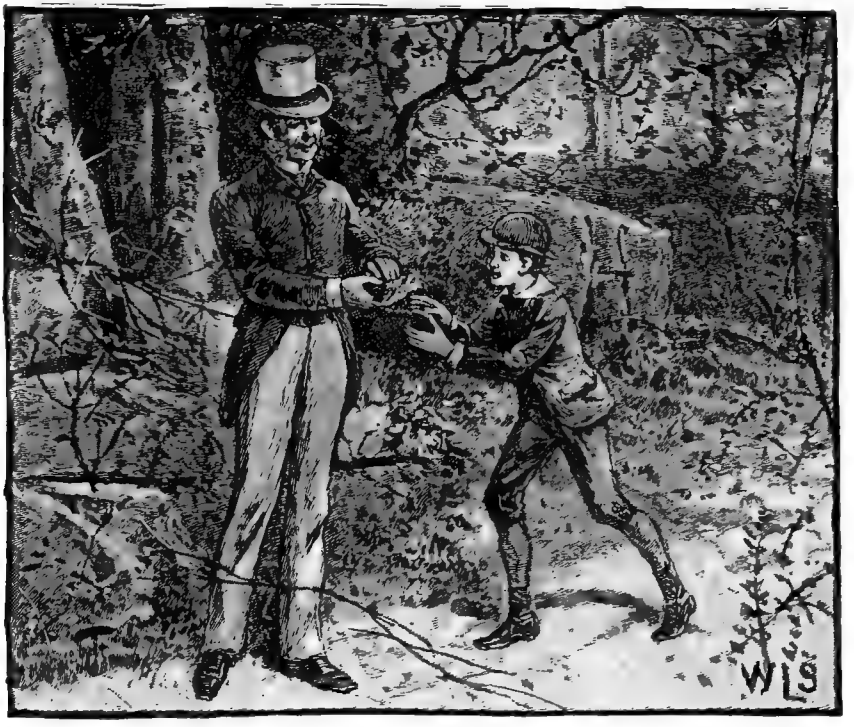
"Oh, where did you get that?" asked Walter, in delight, as he took the little creature and gently smoothed its tiny feathers.

"I picked it up just as you started to follow the mother bird. I think there must have been a dozen of them; but they hid so quickly that I could get only this one."

"Why, I did not see any of them!" said Walter.

"No, for the old bird took your whole attention, which was just what she wanted to do. When she had called you far enough

from her young, and had given them time to hide, she was ready to fly away. I had seen them act in this way so often that I knew



what it meant as soon as I saw her. That was why I was able to catch this little one."

"Can I not take it home and make a cage for it?"

"No; I think you had better let it go. You could not tame it, and it would die in a few days."

"Poor, little, scared thing! I should not like to cause its death," said Walter, as he carefully placed it on the ground.

As soon as it was released it ran into a thick clump of bushes and hid; and Walter could find neither the old bird nor any of the little ones.

A Visit to the Tame Fishes

"Let's go fishing," said Uncle Charlie. Archie and George clapped their hands for joy. They had been at Cape Cod nearly a whole week, and had not yet been on the water.

They walked some distance with Uncle Charlie, and came to a large pond. It was a very pretty pond, and on it were a number of boats. Uncle Charlie pulled one of the boats to the shore, and the three climbed into it.

"Where are the lines and hooks?" asked Archie.

Uncle Charlie did not answer. He only smiled, and rowed the boat to the middle of the pond. At last he stopped rowing, and took a piece of bread from his pocket. This he crumbed into the water.

Soon a number of fishes gathered about the boat to eat the crumbs. Then he held some bread between his fingers, and the fishes nibbled at it, seeming not to be at all afraid. Archie and George fed them in the same way.

"Some of the fishes are named," said Uncle Charlie. "There's one big eel we call 'Jumbo.' Perhaps he will hear me."

Whether the eel really knew his name or not I cannot say; but after Uncle Charlie had called "Jumbo! Jumbo!" a few times, the big eel appeared.

He was even more tame than the other fishes. The boys could take him in their hands and lift him nearly out of the water.

They played with the fishes until dinner-time, and declared the sport much better than catching them with a hook would have been.

"Are all Cape Cod fishes tame, like these?" asked George.

Uncle Charlie smiled again. "No, indeed! Nobody ever catches fish in this pond; but along our coasts thousands and thousands are caught every summer. Probably you have eaten many of them."

NOT FOND OF MUSIC.

CHARLIE was a King Charles spaniel. He was a very pretty dog, with silky black hair, drooping ears, and bright brown eyes. He would sit up and beg, would run after a ball and bring it back in his mouth, and would ride on a sled or in a toy express-wagon.

Charlie had only one trouble. He was very jealous of other dogs and of cats. When he went to ride he would bark at every dog that came near the buggy.

There was a parlor organ in his home, and this was a great puzzle to him. When the high notes were played he thought a little dog was barking inside the organ.

Charlie would run from one side to the other and back again, trying to peep in and find the strange dog. Then he would look up

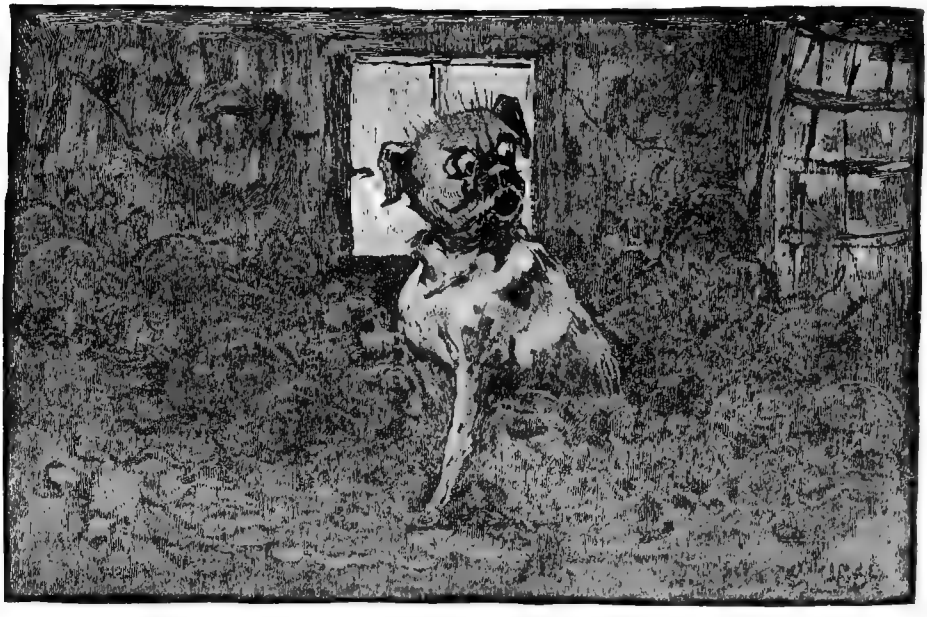
in the lady's face, as if he wanted to say, "Where *is* that dog? Why don't I find him? I wish you wouldn't let him stay; I don't want him." She would stop, or play on a low key, when he begged so.

HOW SCAMP HID FROM THE RATS.

One day my master went out and locked me in the cellar. I felt very lonely for a while, and then I began to think of rats. Pug-dogs don't like rats. The longer I sat still and thought, the more I fancied I heard them.

At last I was so frightened that I got up and walked along the cellar towards the window. It was only a little window, but it was more cheerful in the light than sitting in the dark corner. I sat down and wondered how long it would be before my master would come for me. It seemed almost an hour since he had gone.

I was just about to bark, when I saw a big barrel close by me. I went towards it. A great pile of coal was behind it. I ran up



the coal and looked over into the barrel. There was something white inside. It smelt good. I reached over. Whoop! I lost my balance and fell inside. Oh! but I was scared. I twisted myself as I fell, and so did not land on my head, but plump on my side.

It was dark inside, and when I got over my fright I found the white stuff was quite hard. It smelt so good that I thought I would taste it; so I bit off a piece. I ate it, and liked it. Then I tried another mouthful. Then I ate a lot. I was having a fine feast, when the cellar-door opened, and I heard my master call, "Scamp! Scamp!" I did not stir. He came inside and said, "Here, Scamp! — where are you?" I waited, for I thought he would soon come after me. I knew I was doing something wrong.

He then came towards the barrel, calling me, but I did not answer. At last he turned around, and was going out again, when I thought of the rats. Then I barked. "Where are you, you Scamp?" cried my master. I barked again. He came to the barrel and looked in.

"What are you doing there?" he asked. I could not wag my tail, for I had sunk deep into the white stuff in the barrel. So he caught hold of me and carried me upstairs. Oh, how he laughed! He held me before a looking-glass, and you should have seen me. I was almost black with coal-dust, and the white stuff was sticking to me.

"So you have tumbled into the soap-fat barrel, have you?" my master asked me, as he took me into the stable to wash me. I wanted to tell him I was only hiding from the rats; but I could not.

TINY TORMENTORS.

Do you know what a gnat is? It is the little mosquito that troubles you in the summer-time. What a tease it is, to be sure! But why are mosquitoes so troublesome? When I tell you how queerly they are made you will understand it.

Their small bodies are long, and shaped just like a tube. When they are lying quietly (and they do sometimes) their wings cross each other queerly. If you could only look at these wings through a glass you would think they were very pretty things. The edges are all covered with scales, shaped like long plates, and beautifully marked, something like fishes.

Their antennæ, or feelers, look as if they were made of the finest feathers. As for their eyes, they are so large as to cover the whole head; they look like lace. Some are green, and change with the light to red.

What the gnat uses for piercing the skin is called the trunk, or proboscis. It is much like the lancets in a doctor's or surgeon's

case. The trunk is a little tube, split from end to end that it may open easily. Inside of it is a perfect bundle of stings, which look like needles. They are very sharp, with five points, and bent just like crotchet-needles. When the gnat lights on your face or hands in go those five needles. They carry with them a drop of poison to your blood, which stings well.

If you are ever stung let the naughty gnat draw the hooks out very carefully. You will not feel the sting half as much as if the insect left the five poison hooks in your flesh.

THE MOUSE AND THE OYSTER.

It was such a funny thing that happened! Papa brought some oysters home in the shell one day, and placed them in the back shed. There they stayed till the next morning, when mamma used them.

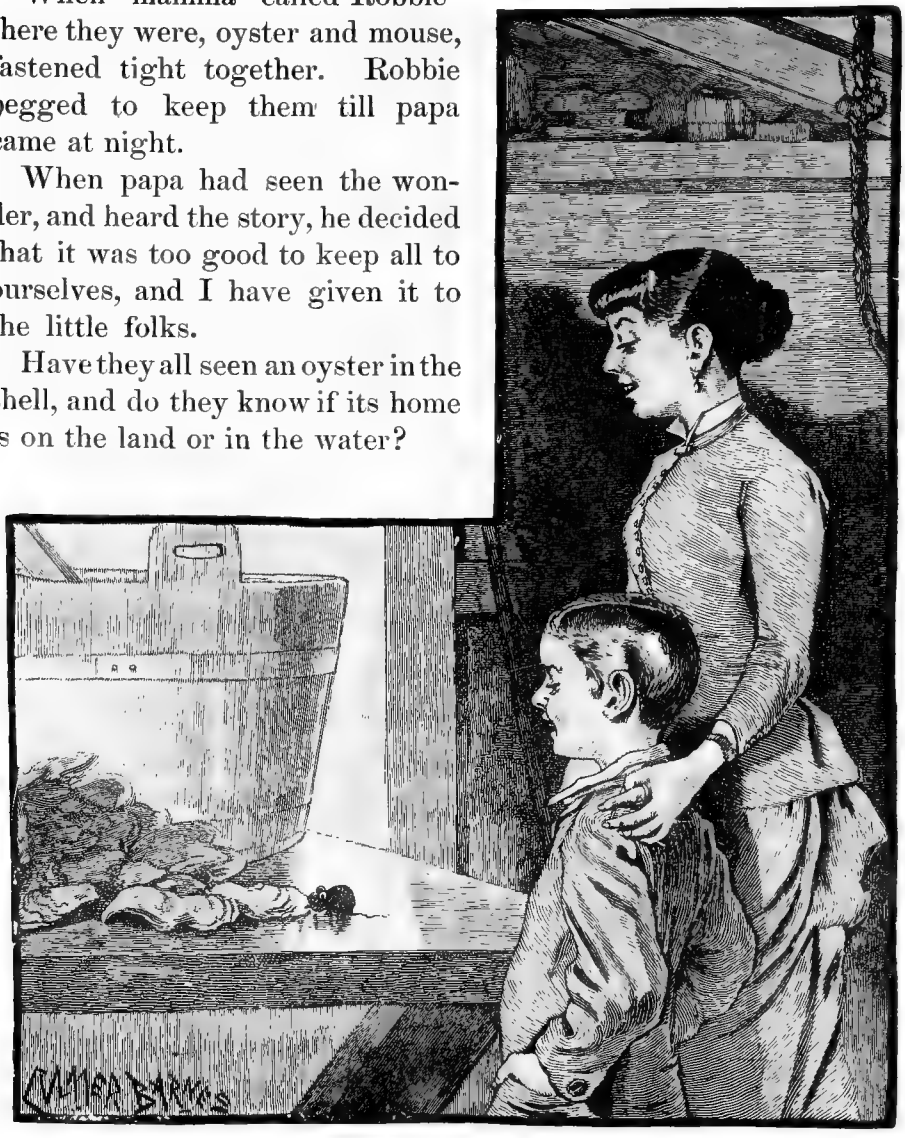
She laughed, and laughed, at what she saw, and called Robbie to see. The oysters had opened their shells just a little, and a young mouse — a tiny one, not more than an inch long — had popped its head between the sharp edges of one. At once the oyster closed upon the poor fellow, and there he was, caught in a trap never set for mice

The fat oyster nipped poor mousie's little head so tight between the sharp edges of the shell that he was choked in a few minutes.

When mamma called Robbie there they were, oyster and mouse, fastened tight together. Robbie begged to keep them till papa came at night.

When papa had seen the wonder, and heard the story, he decided that it was too good to keep all to ourselves, and I have given it to the little folks.

Have they all seen an oyster in the shell, and do they know if its home is on the land or in the water?

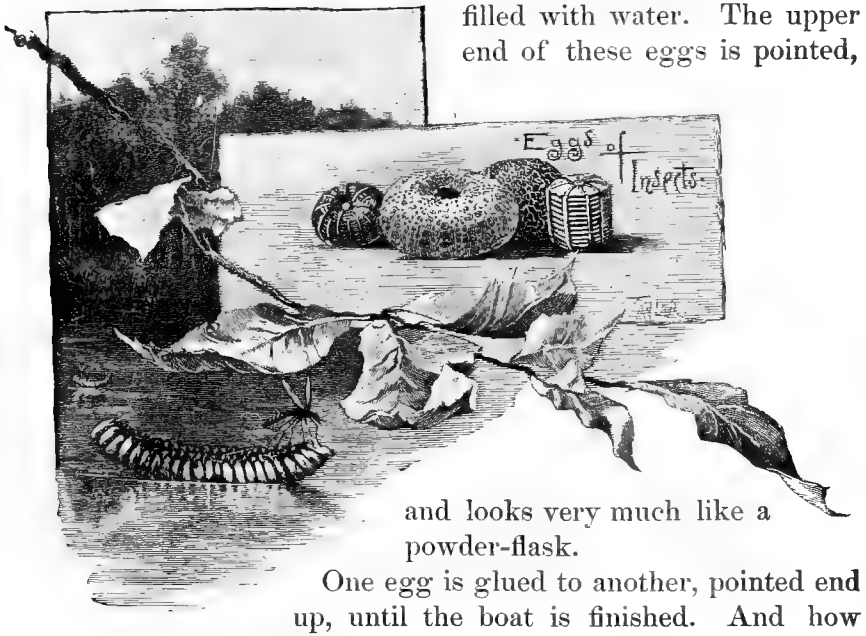


And why was that little mousie stealing around at night? Why did he not mind his mother, and stay safe and happy in the nest with her?

THE BOATS THE GNATS BUILD.

Did you ever hear about the wonderful boats the gnats build? They lay their eggs in the water, and the eggs float until it is time for them to hatch. You can see these little egg rafts on almost any pool in the summer.

The eggs are so heavy that one alone would sink. The cunning mother fastens them all together until they form a hollow boat. It will not upset even if it is filled with water. The upper end of these eggs is pointed,



and looks very much like a powder-flask.

One egg is glued to another, pointed end up, until the boat is finished. And how many eggs do you think it takes? From two hundred and fifty to three hundred. When the young are hatched they always come from the under side, leaving the empty boat afloat.

These eggs are very, very small. First they are white, then green, then a dark gray. They swim just like little fishes, and hatch in two days. Then they change again to a kind of sheath.[1] In another week this sheath bursts open and lets out a winged mosquito. It is all ready for work. There are so many of them born in a summer that, were it not for the birds and larger insects, we should be "eaten up alive."

[1] Chrysalis.

THE DOG THAT EARNED A MEDAL.

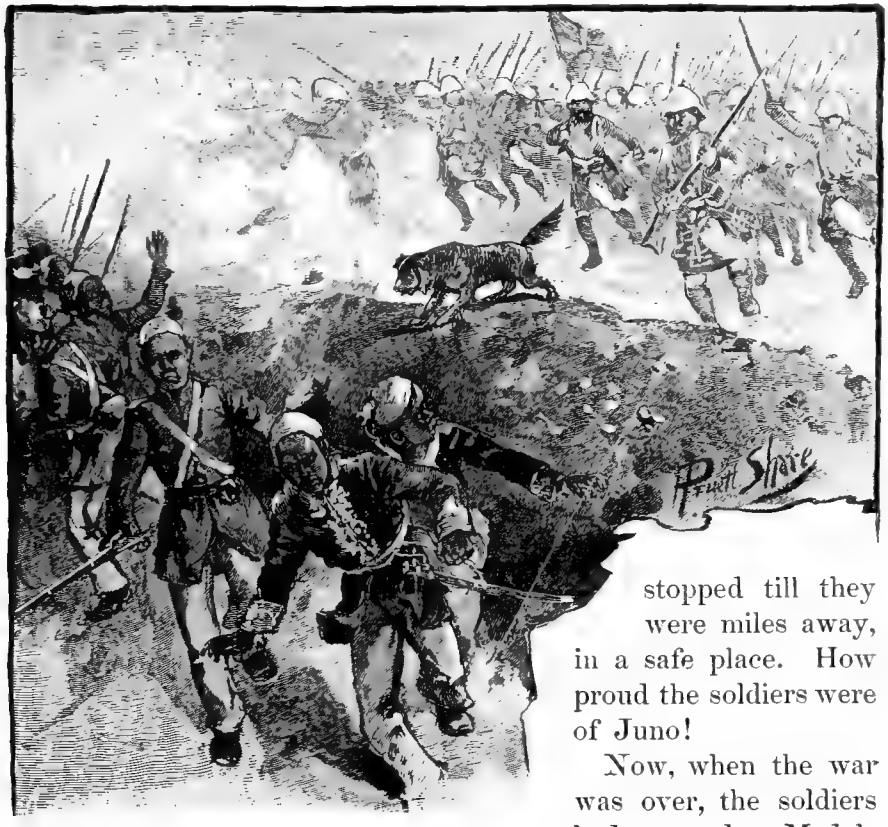
JUNO is a red setter. She belongs to a regiment of British soldiers, — the brave Gordon Highlanders. This regiment went to Egypt to fight against the Arabs, and took Juno with them.

One day there was a great battle at a place called Tel-el-Kebir. The Highlanders were ordered to charge upon the enemy. The Arabs were hidden behind great banks of earth, waiting for the attack.

Then the drums beat and the trumpets blew. The Highlanders came up on a run. But ahead of them was brave Juno. She leaped over the banks of earth, barking with all her might.

This frightened the ignorant Arabs, for they had been told that the Highlanders had fierce blood-hounds with them, and they thought Juno must be one of these fearful beasts. So they began running away as fast as they could. This was fine play for Juno. She raced after them, snapping at their heels and barking with delight; and the more she yelped the faster did the Arabs scamper.

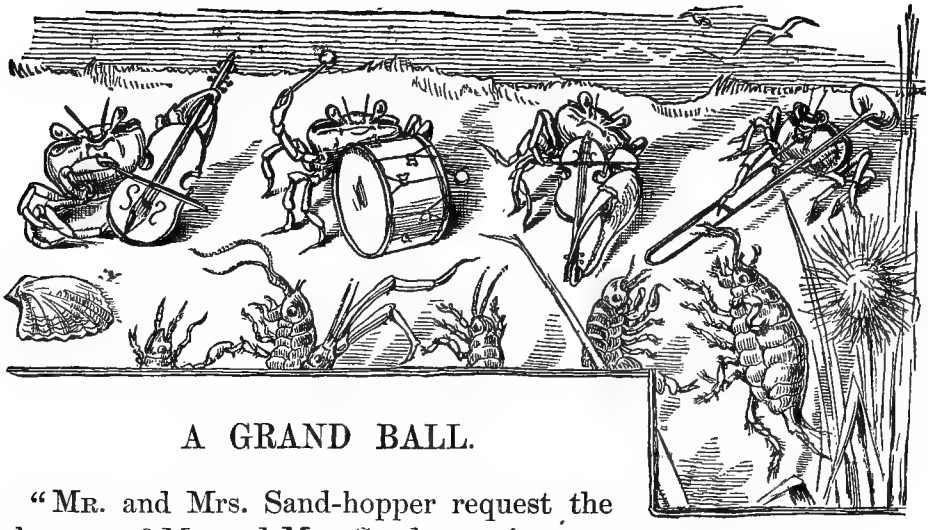
The Highlanders did not have much fighting to do that day. The poor Arabs ran themselves quite out of breath. They never



stopped till they were miles away, in a safe place. How proud the soldiers were of Juno!

Now, when the war was over, the soldiers had a parade. Medals were given to those who had been brave. But nobody had so much attention as Juno. She marched proudly with her regiment, and all the people praised and petted her.

Perhaps Juno was contented with caresses; yet many people said she ought to have had a medal, too, as well as the men. The playful dog really scared the enemy more than the soldiers did; and, besides, she did not hurt any of the poor Arabs.



A GRAND BALL.

"Mr. and Mrs. Sand-hopper request the pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. Sand-screw's company, on Thursday evening, May 24th. Dancing."

That is the way the invitations were worded. Now, we were not invited to the party, it is true; but still, as we happen to be strolling in the neighborhood, there certainly can be no harm in our looking in for a moment, to see how the dancers are enjoying themselves; and it will be very easy, for, as it is a warm evening, the ball is held out of doors, on the sand-beach here.

Dear! Dear! What a gay scene! What is it they are dancing?

"First couple forward and back, jump over each other, and turn somersault back to places! All hands jump! Second couple right and left, three back somersaults, and hop to places! Ladies chain! All hands hop! Right claw, left claw, down the middle! All hands somersault back to places!"

Well! I never saw a dance like that before, did you? And everybody is dancing: no lazy people here. There must be a thousand people. A thousand! There must be a million!

"Hop! Hop! Skip! Skip! Right claw, left claw, down the middle!"

Don't you wish we could be sand-hoppers, too, just for a few minutes? That is Mr. Sand-hopper himself in the picture, the one who is just jumping backward so nimbly. He is dancing with his cousin, Miss Corophium, — that lovely creature with the long, graceful, claw-like antennæ. She is not quite used to dancing on sand, for she lives in the mud at home; but still she is enjoying herself very much. The lady in the left-hand corner is Mrs. Sand-screw, who is dancing back to back with Mr. Kroyler's Sand-screw, her third cousin. It is quite a family party, you see, for host and guests are all related to each other.

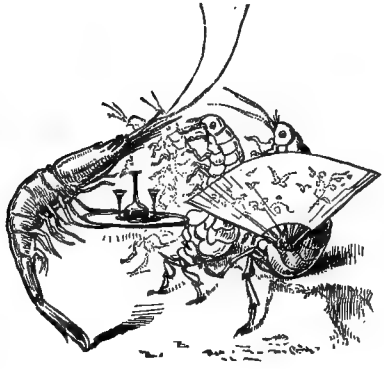
Curious people, aren't they? The biggest cannot be more than an inch long. Their hard, shining shells are polished as bright as possible, and their claws all neatly arranged. They have twelve legs, some of which they use in walking and some in swimming; indeed, one of their family names is Amphipoda, which means "both kinds of feet." Some of the ladies are carrying their eggs with them, packed away under the fore-part of their bodies, just where the legs are joined on. Shouldn't you think they would be afraid of dropping them?

Ah! Now they are going to supper! There is the feast, spread out on the sand. Great heaps of delicious rotten sea-weed, and plenty of worms, — a supper fit for a king, if the king happens to

be a sand-hopper. They seem very hungry, and no wonder, after dancing so hard!

They will eat anything and everything, — these tiny creatures; if you were to drop your handkerchief now, it would be bitten to rags in five minutes.

The lovely Miss Corophium is beating the sand with her long feelers, to see if there are any more worms under it. Greedy creature! Can't you be content with what is given you? But look! What is the matter now? Oh! Oh! How dreadful! An enemy is coming. "The Green Crab! The Green Crab! Run, hop, burrow under ground, for your lives!" Off they all go, helter-skelter, Hopper, Screw, and Corophium.



The family, and as many guests as they can shelter, disappear under ground into their tiny holes; the rest make off wherever they can. Have all escaped? Alas! No! The unfortunate Kroyler's Sand-screw has a lame leg, and cannot go as fast as the rest. He is seized by the terrible Green Crab, the enemy of his whole race, and gobbled up before our very eyes.

The ball is over; come away! Somehow I don't care so much about being a sand-hopper now, do you?

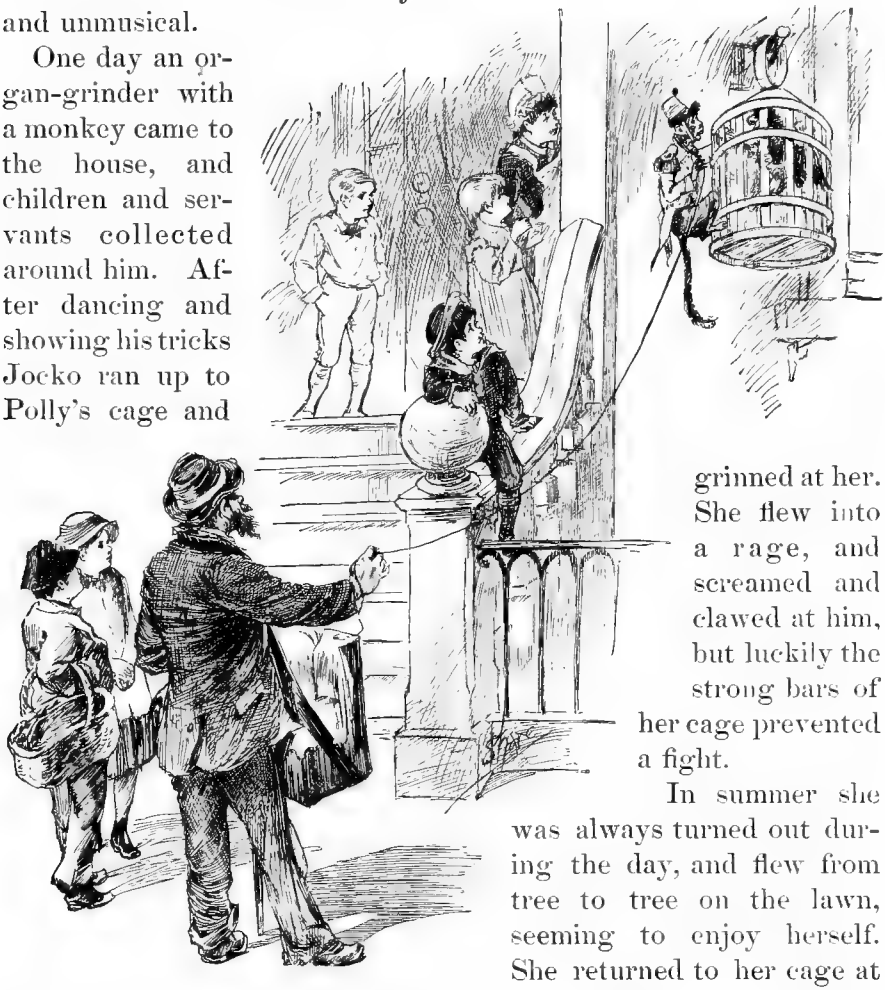
OUR PARROT.

Some years ago we had a large green and yellow parrot, which was a great pet with some of the family. Polly had her favorites, and would seem to hate some people and like others, for no reason at all that we could see.

On rainy days she would show off all she knew. She would sing, cry, and laugh, and call up all the servants one after another.

She could imitate different voices so exactly as to deceive any one, but her own voice was very harsh and unmusical.

One day an organ-grinder with a monkey came to the house, and children and servants collected around him. After dancing and showing his tricks Jocko ran up to Polly's cage and grinned at her. She flew into a rage, and screamed and clawed at him, but luckily the strong bars of her cage prevented a fight.



In summer she was always turned out during the day, and flew from tree to tree on the lawn, seeming to enjoy herself. She returned to her cage at night, and would often come back of her own accord at dinner-time.

One night she stayed out too late. The girl who took care of her could not induce Polly to come down from the top of a high tree. At last she was obliged to leave her, as she thought, until next morning. But this was "poor Poll's" last night of life. The next day her bright and pretty feathers were found scattered under the tree, for she had been torn in pieces by a large owl.

QUEER CONVEYANCES.

Our little ones in the country may have smiled to see a chicken mounted on the old hen's back while she sat sunning herself in the yard. Perhaps the young thing with few feathers sang a soft "Cree-cree," to tell that he enjoyed his position. At night he would like better to be brooded under the mother's wings.

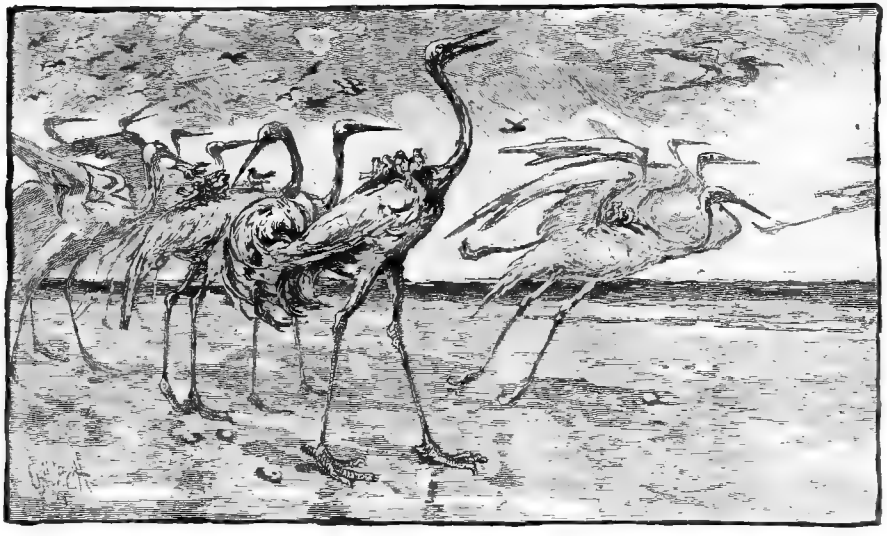
When Biddy got upon her feet and went marching on, off tumbled chick. Now he must use his own legs or be left behind. Those bits of legs may well be weary sometimes with long journeys about the farm.

One or two species of birds are known to fly long distances, carrying their young on their backs.

Small birds take passage across the Mediterranean Sea on the backs of large and strong ones. They could not fly so far themselves. Their strength would give out, and they would drop in the water and drown.

Along the northern shore of the sea, in autumn, these little birds assemble, to wait the coming of cranes from the north, as people wait for the train at a railroad station.

With the first cold blast the cranes arrive, flock after flock. They fly low, over the cultivated fields. They utter a peculiar cry, as



of warning, or calling. It answers the same purpose as the ringing of the bell when the train is about to start.

The small birds understand it so. They get excited. They hasten aboard, scrambling for places. The first to come get the best seats. If the passengers are too many, some will have to flit back to the hedges till the next train. How they chatter good-byes, — those who go and those who stay!

No tickets have they, but all the same they are conveyed safely. Doubtless the great birds like this warm covering for their backs. In this way the small birds pay their fare; and it is these last who must be out in the wet if it rains.

The little passengers are of different species, like Americans, Irish, Germans, and Chinese, travelling together in cars or steamships. Their journey takes them through the air, high above the wide sweep of waters. They are close companions on the way.

By and by they reach the beautiful South country. There they build nests and sing sweetly, as they build here, and sing for us in our happy summer-time.

Indeed, God cares for the sparrows!

A TOAD WITH HORNS.

MARK always went to the post-office at noon on his way home from school, and May always met him by the elm-tree.

One day the two children came running into the house, calling "O mamma, come quick and see what we have got!"

"Well, Mark, what is it?" mamma asked, as she came into the room.

"We don't know. It came in the mail and it's directed to Mark and May Arwine. What do you suppose it is? Who could have sent it?" The children danced around the table, on which lay a small square box.

"I think I know who sent it," Mrs. Arwine said, smiling. "What it is I cannot tell. The quickest way to find out will be to open the box."

So Mark cut the strings. May looked on, getting her head so much in his way that the scissors almost went into her eyes.

When he took off the cover something hopped up in her face. She screamed with fright, and even Mark jumped quickly out of the way.

"Why, mamma!" he exclaimed, "it's alive. It's like a toad; but see what queer bunches it has on its head, like little horns."

The toad sat perfectly still after its first jump, and May came a little nearer.

"Will he bite, mamma, or poison us?" she asked.

"No, May, I don't think he will bite. Papa must have sent him from Wyoming. Don't you remember he told us about the horned toads they had there?"

"Oh, yes, mamma; that's it! What a funny fellow he is! How can we keep him?"

"What shall we call him?"

"What will he eat?"

"Wait," mamma said, "one question at a time. I think you had better put him in the box now, and come to dinner. I have been waiting for you for some time."

"All right, mamma. I should think the toad would be hungry, too. He has been waiting a good while for his dinner."

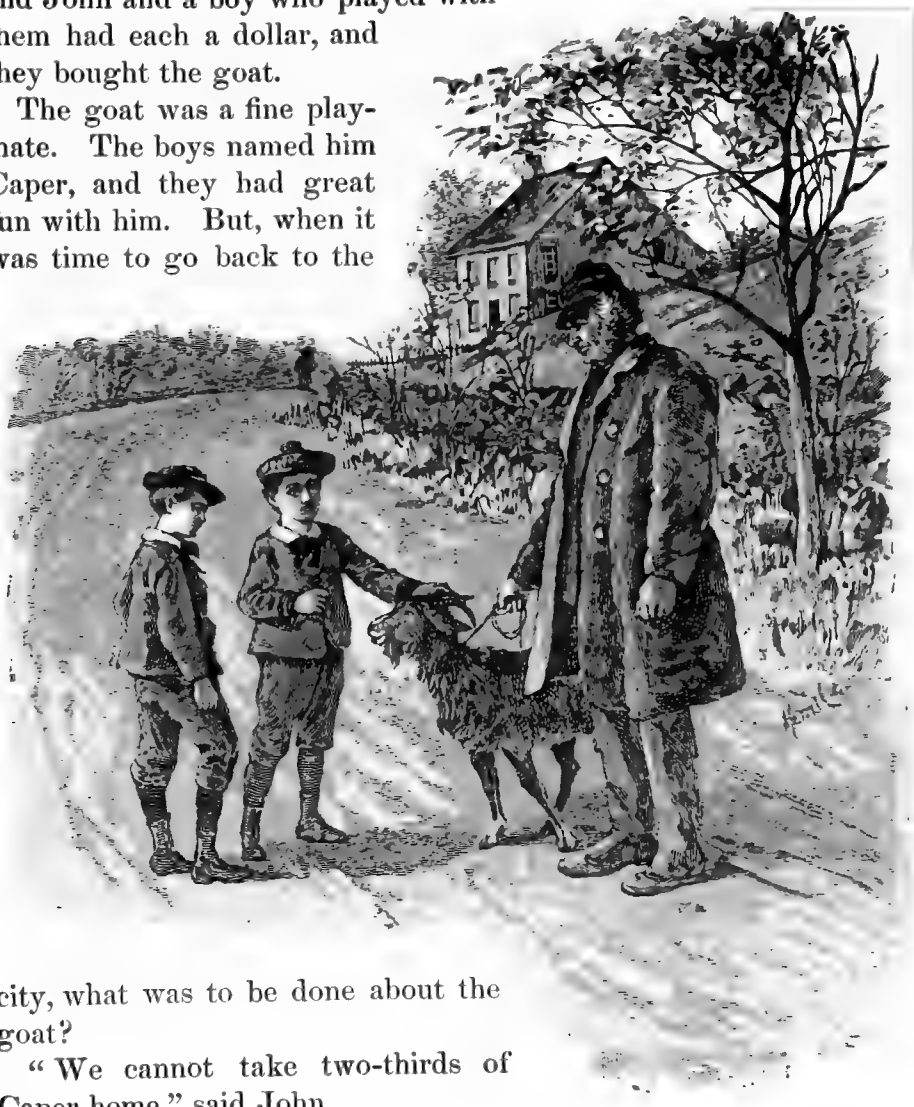
After dinner mamma gave the children an old bird-cage to keep their pet in. They gave him a good meal of flies and bread-crumbs, which he seemed to like very much.

They talked of a great many names for him, but at last called him Joe. The last time I heard from them Joe was very tame and knew his name. He was a great pet with all the children in the neighborhood.

CAPER, THE GOAT.

One summer, in the country, Eddy and John found a man who had a goat to sell. The man asked three dollars for him. Eddy and John and a boy who played with them had each a dollar, and they bought the goat.

The goat was a fine playmate. The boys named him Caper, and they had great fun with him. But, when it was time to go back to the city, what was to be done about the goat?



"We cannot take two-thirds of Caper home," said John.

"Well," said Eddy, "maybe papa will give us a dollar, and we will ask Carl to sell us his part. We own most of him, you know."

Papa gave the dollar, and Carl at last made up his mind to sell out his share, rather than divide poor Caper. So the goat went to the city. The little boys cared more for him there than they had cared in the country, where there were plenty of pets.

It was fun to see the boys and the goat play at hide-and-seek. When Eddy gave a sign the two boys ran off to hide. In a minute Caper rushed into the house to find them. All over the house he would go. As soon as he found the boys he skipped out before them to the gate-post, which was the "goal."

There he was sure to stand, on his hind legs, ready to butt them as they came up. This he seemed to think was a part of the play.

When Christmas came some friends gave Eddy and John a beautiful little carriage for Caper, with harness and all complete. Caper went quite well in harness, and the little boys had more fun with him than ever.

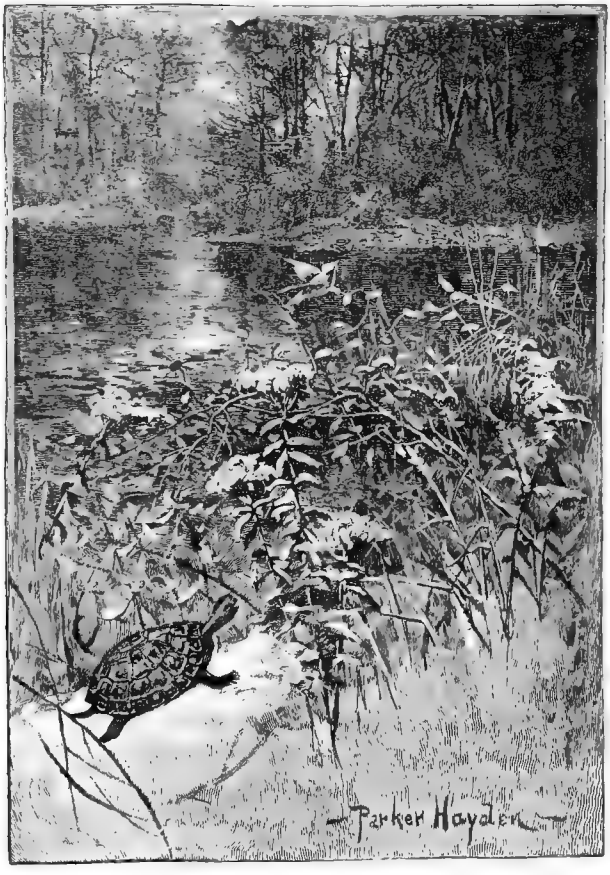
When the warm days came again the boys were told that they were going with mamma to spend the summer on a farm.

"Oh, may we take Caper?" they asked. Mamma said they might write and ask the farmer. So they did, and he said, "Yes, bring the goat. I shall be glad to have him here."

One day, at the farm, Caper ran into the yard where all the cows were. They were not used to a goat, so they chased him into a corner, and then they all stood in a half-circle about him. They looked as if they would ask, "What strange thing is this, with horns on its head?" Poor Caper was glad when the farmer came and drove the cows off.

THE MUD-TURTLE.

"WILL you marry me?" said the mud-turtle to the yellow-bird. The yellow-bird sat on a spray of jewel-weed, and was as bright as the jewel blossoms themselves; but she turned her back on the mud-turtle, and paid no attention to him.



"You need not be so scornful," said the mud-turtle. "I am well-to-do, and can make you happy. My mud-house has three rooms in it, and I hope that is enough. You are probably not used to more than one."

"That is true," answered the yellow-bird, turning and looking at him with her bright black eyes; "I am used to one room only, but that one room is a large one. Its ceiling is the blue sky, and its floor is the green earth; and it is so wide that I have never found the walls of it yet. Sweet! sweet! chirrup! chu! Good-by to you, mud-turtle! I wish you joy of your three rooms!" and away flew the yellow-bird.

"What a disagreeable, ill-tempered bird!" said the mud-turtle, as he drew his head in slowly. "She would have made a very bad wife. I will marry one of my own kind. After all, there is nothing like a mud-turtle." And he was quite right.

PONTO'S DRILL.

"AH–OUO–YU–OW!" said Teddy, yawning.

"Ya-hor-wa*yu!*" responded Ponto promptly, waking up to yawn also.

"Don't mock me, sir!" said Teddy, sternly. "Your manners are shocking. Ponto, do you like fractions? Frankly, now, on your honor!"

"Yow!" said Ponto, in a mournful whine.

"You don't!" exclaimed Teddy. "Sensible dog! Give me your paw! I detest them."

"It is a singular thing, Ponto," he added, "that you and I always think alike. It only shows what a *very* remarkable dog you are. I am sure you are thinking at this moment that, as I have learned my lesson, it is time for you to learn yours. Eh?"

Ponto wagged his tail feebly, and looked dejected.

"Right, as usual!" said Teddy. "It *is* time; high time. Go and get your musket."

Ponto went slowly and sadly into the hall, and returned with a stick in his mouth.

"Sit up, now!" said Teddy. "Hold up your head, while I put your cap on: so! Ready! Shoulder ARMS!"

Ponto sat up, and shouldered his musket very cleverly.

"Present *arms!*" cried Teddy.

Ponto took the musket in his mouth, and held it steadily.

"Ground arms!"

Ponto dropped the musket on the ground, and put his nose on it.

"Good dog!" said Teddy. "Said your lesson very well. Here's your cooky."

"Now," he continued, when the cooky had been disposed of, "show me how the brave soldier dies for his country."

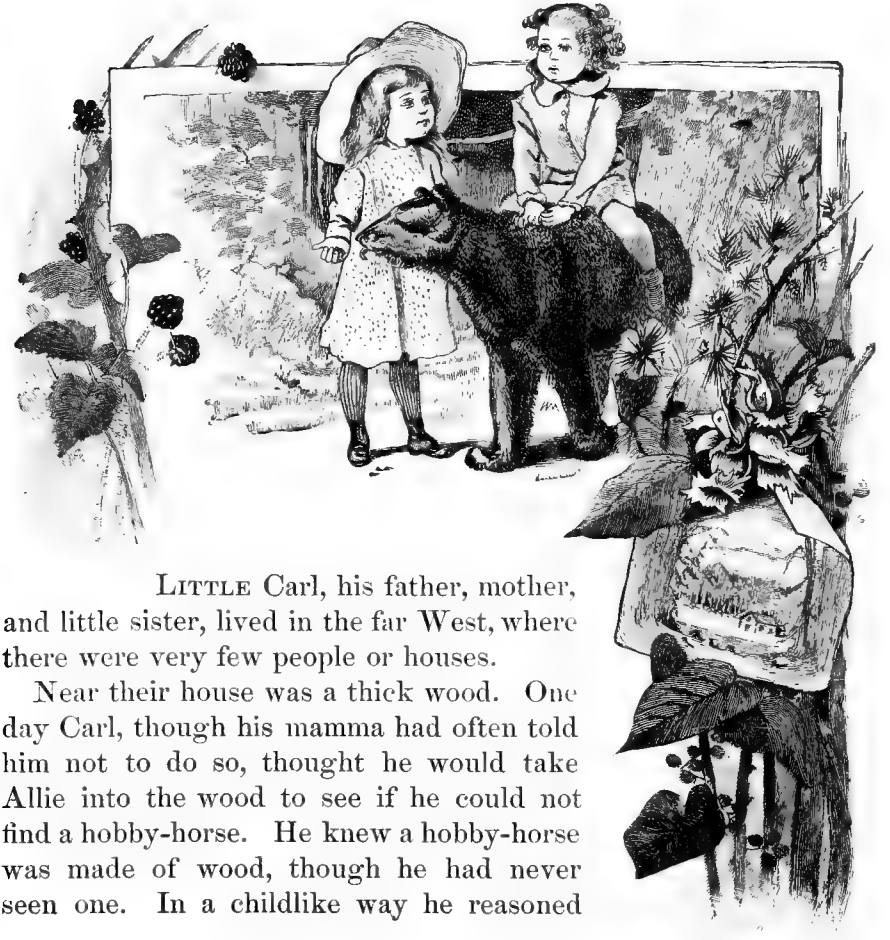
Ponto rolled over on his back, with his four legs waving in the air.

"No! no!" cried Teddy. "That isn't the brave soldier, stupid! That's the recreant knight begging for mercy. Brave soldier, Ponto! Try again! Die for your country!"

Ponto threw his head back, then fell suddenly on his face, and lay motionless.

"That's a good boy!" said his master, patting him. "Clever Ponto! Best of doggies! No more school for to-day. Come along and have a run in the meadow. One! two! three! and away!"

A GOOD-NATURED BEAR.



Little Carl, his father, mother, and little sister, lived in the far West, where there were very few people or houses.

Near their house was a thick wood. One day Carl, though his mamma had often told him not to do so, thought he would take Allie into the wood to see if he could not find a hobby-horse. He knew a hobby-horse was made of wood, though he had never seen one. In a childlike way he reasoned

that, if they were made of wood, he could perhaps find one in the woods. His papa had promised to buy him one when he went to the village; but Carl felt that he could not wait.

They wandered hand-in-hand into the woods. They saw so many pretty flowers, and found such sweet berries, that they almost forgot the hobby-horse. Suddenly Carl shouted, "Here, Allie! Here is our hobby-horse at last, and a real live one, too! Isn't he cunning? Come, quick, and hold him till I can get on."

Of course it was not a hobby-horse. It really was a good-natured little tame bear. He had wandered away from his home, like the children, and was as fond of roaming about as they. Allie tried to hold him by the ears till Carl could climb on his back, but the bear's hair was so soft and glossy that her little fat fingers slipped off. The bear, smelling some berries which Allie had in her hand, began licking them out with his tongue. In this way he remained quiet long enough for Carl to scramble on his back. He got seated, and was thinking what a nice ride he would have, but just then a loud scream from his mother, who had come in sight, caused the bear to scamper off in a fright. He went so fast that poor little Carl was tumbled upon the ground.

Mamma was so glad to get her children home safe that she did not punish Carl for his disobedience. If he had not disobeyed her he would not have had that big lump on his forehead, which he got by falling from the bear.

After that day Allie always felt sad and worried when her papa went out to hunt, fearing lest he might shoot the "runaway horsey." She liked the bear because he was so nice and sleek, and "didn't mean to hurt Carl, after all."

A GAY LITTLE GARDENER.

In New Guinea there is a bird which not only builds a house, but has a garden too. He is known by the name of the garden-bird.

This is a strange habit for a bird, is it not? Perhaps our little ones would be pleased to see how the bird house and garden look. If so, here is a picture of them.

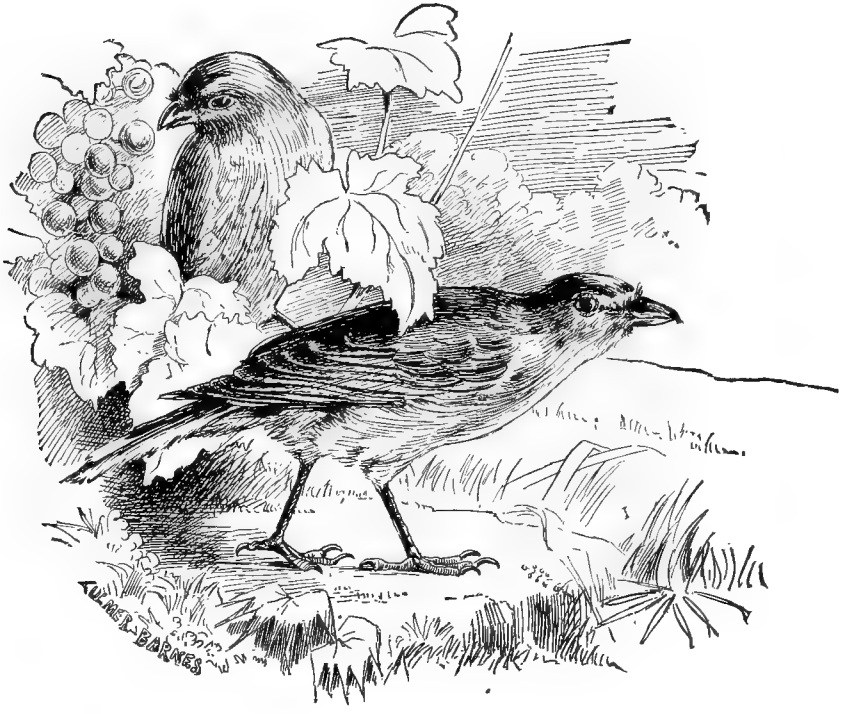
When he is going to build, the garden bird first looks for a level spot of ground which has a shrub in the centre. Then he covers the bottom of the stem of this shrub with a heap of moss. Why he does this I cannot tell you. No doubt he thinks it looks fine.

Next he brings some long twigs from other plants. These he sticks into the ground, so that they lean against his shrub. On one side he leaves a place open for a door. The twigs keep on growing, so that his little cabin is like a bower.

Last of all, in front of the door, this dainty bird makes a pretty lawn of moss. He carefully picks out every pebble and bit of

straw. Then upon this lawn he scatters purple berries and pink flowers. As often as the flowers wilt he takes them away, and brings fresh ones.

Now, this is quite a large house and garden for a bird. The little cabin is sometimes three feet wide, and half as high. There is plenty of room in it for two or three families, if need be; and



the garden is larger than the house. So busy and tasteful a bird as the garden-bird ought to be a good example to idle children. The people of New Guinea think so much of him that they never molest his little dwelling.

You may like to know how this bird gardener is dressed. In modest colors, you may be sure. The top of his head, his back, his wings, and tail are olive-brown, and beneath he is greenish-red. He is about as large as a thrush or blackbird.

THE GREEDY HENS.

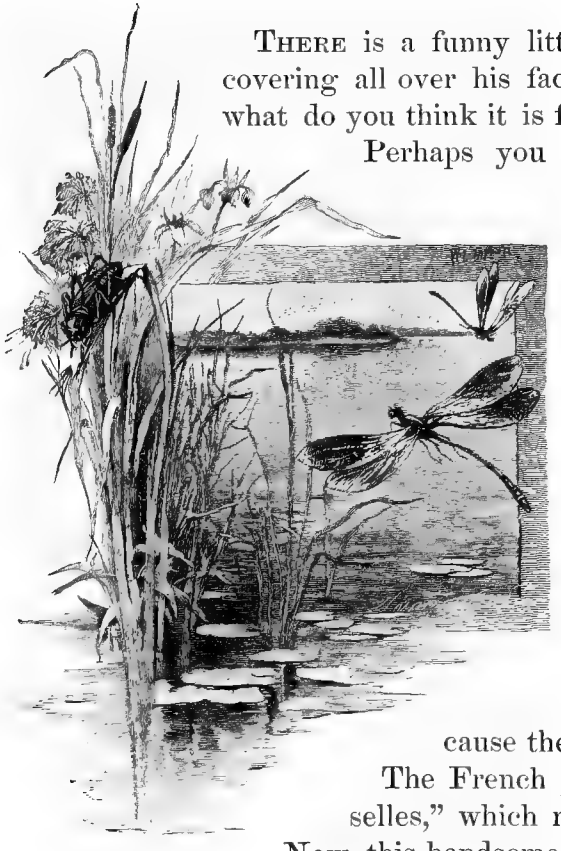
One day I chopped up a large plate of meat and took it out to feed my hens.

There happened to be one piece much larger than the others, having a bone in it so I could not cut it. As I set the meat before my hens one greedy one caught this large piece and ran off with it. Another hen wanted the same piece, and ran after her to see if she could not get it for herself. While they were chasing each other around the yard, trying to eat the bone, which was too large for them to swallow, the other hens ate up all the finely cut meat.

When the two hens got tired of quarrelling about the bone they went off and left it lying on the ground. They looked silly enough when they came back and found the nice meat all gone. They had lost their dinner through their selfish greediness.

Doubtless this was very foolish conduct in the hens; but I have known boys and girls to be no wiser in this respect than Bantam and Speckle.

THE BUG WITH A MASK.



THERE is a funny little creature that wears a covering all over his face just like a mask. And what do you think it is for? Let us see.

Perhaps you have seen the beautiful dragon-flies that look so much like humming-birds and butterflies, too. They have broad wings, as thin as a fly's, that glitter like glass in the sunshine. Their backs are just like blue steel.

You will always find them in the hot summer months flying through the fields, or over ponds and rivers. In the country they are called "devil's darning-needles," because they are so slender, perhaps. The French people call them "demoiselles," which means young ladies.

Now, this handsome, swift creature grows from an ugly bug, that crawls over the mud at the bottom of the pond. And this is the way it comes about: —

Little white eggs are laid on the water; the ripples carry them far away, and then they sink into the mud.

The warm sun hatches them, and from each egg creeps a tiny grub of greenish color. They are hungry creatures, with very bad hearts. They eat up every little insect that comes in their way. They are very sly, too. They creep towards their prey as a cat does when she is in search of a rat.

They lift their small, hairy legs as if they were to do the work. It is not the legs, but the head that does it. Suddenly it seems to open, and down drops a kind of visor, with joints and hinges.

This strange thing is stretched out until it swings from the chin. Quick as a flash some insect is caught in the trap and eaten.

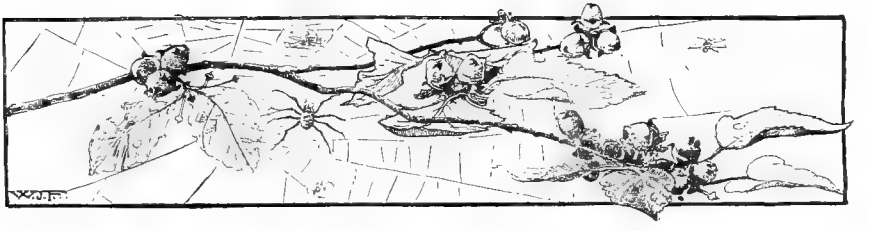
This queer trap, or mask, is the under lip of the grub. Instead of being flesh, like ours, it is hard and horny, and large enough to cover the whole face.

It has teeth and muscles, and the grub uses it as a weapon, too.

It is nearly a year before this ugly-looking grub gets its wings. A little while after it is hatched four tiny buds sprout from its shoulders, just as you see them on the branch of a tree. These are really only watery sacs at first. Inside of them the wings grow slowly until you can see the bright colors shining through.

Some morning this hairy-legged little bug creeps up a branch. Then he shakes out his wings and flies away into the air, a slender, beautiful dragon-fly.

I have told you of the only creature in the world that wears this curious mask.



THE COW THAT SAID "PLEASE."

FREDDIE was a sad little coward. He always wanted mamma to sit close beside him when he was going to sleep. One night, when he called for his usual go-to-bed story, mamma told him this one: "Once upon a time there was a lady who had a little boy, and one night she said to him, 'Now, if you will be brave and go to sleep all alone, I will pack a trunk, and to-morrow we will go out to see Uncle John and Aunt Bessie.'" That was the shortest story she ever told him, but Freddie thought it the nicest, for he guessed in a minute who the lady was and who the little boy was. He thought so much of the good times coming that he was not afraid, and the first thing he knew it was bright morning.

They got out to the farm just in time for dinner. Freddie could hardly stop for that, though, he was so impatient to go out to the barn to see all the animals.

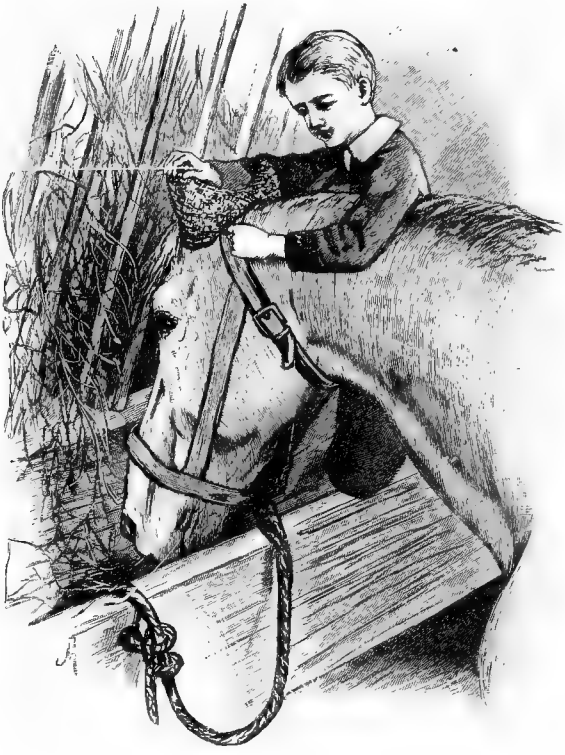
Aunt Bessie hurried her dinner, so as to please the little boy. She took him first to call on the cow. Her name was Whitefoot, and she thought it was nearly time she had her dinner, so she said, "Moo!" very loud. Such a loud noise, coming from such a great, big creature, frightened Freddie, and he began to cry, making a great deal more noise than the cow did. Aunt Bessie tried to quiet him by telling him that Whitefoot was only saying "Please," because she wanted her dinner. Freddie told mamma afterwards that he would like that cow better if she wouldn't talk so loud.

Whitefoot seemed to be quite as much surprised at Freddie's big noise as Freddie was at hers, and she didn't talk any more. Aunt Bessie patted her nose and gave her some cornstalks. After a little while Freddie grew brave enough to feed her with some of the longest stalks.

Every day Uncle John gave him a ride out to the garden in his wheelbarrow, and back again on top of his load of cornstalks.

APPLE-JACK'S NEW HAT.

HARRY'S father had an old white horse. His name was Jack. But he liked apples so well that they called him Apple-Jack. He would eat them out of Harry's little, fat hand, and nod his head, as if he was saying "Thank you, thank you! Give me another."



Bridget said she often wished the horse was dead. She could never keep an apple in the kitchen to make a pie, or a pudding, or anything. She thought she should be obliged to lock them up in a strong box.

The little boy was very much vexed, and began looking about to see what else he could find to give the old white horse. Everything had been put away. He was just going out ready to cry, when he saw Bridget's new knitted dishcloth that mamma had made for her.

"Oh," he cried, "here's Apple-Jack's net." And he took it, and went off with it to the stable. The horse knew Harry, and seemed to love him. When the little fellow climbed up to his shaggy white head, and fitted Bridget's dishcloth carefully about his ears, he was quite proud, and turned round to see if the other horses noticed what a nice hat he had on. The next morning there was a great inquiry to know what had become of the new dishcloth. Harry

heard them asking, but he thought he had only taken what belonged to the horse. It looked to him very much like Apple-Jack's net.

In the course of the day the horse was eating grass in the yard. Bridget, looking out of the window, saw something on his head which she fancied looked like her new dishcloth. She looked again. It was very strange. Then she went to the door to see plainer. Yes, there it was on the old horse's head, — her beautiful dishcloth, that she only washed the china with!

Out she went, and ran after the horse with such fury that he kicked up his heels. He took to the road, with Bridget after him,

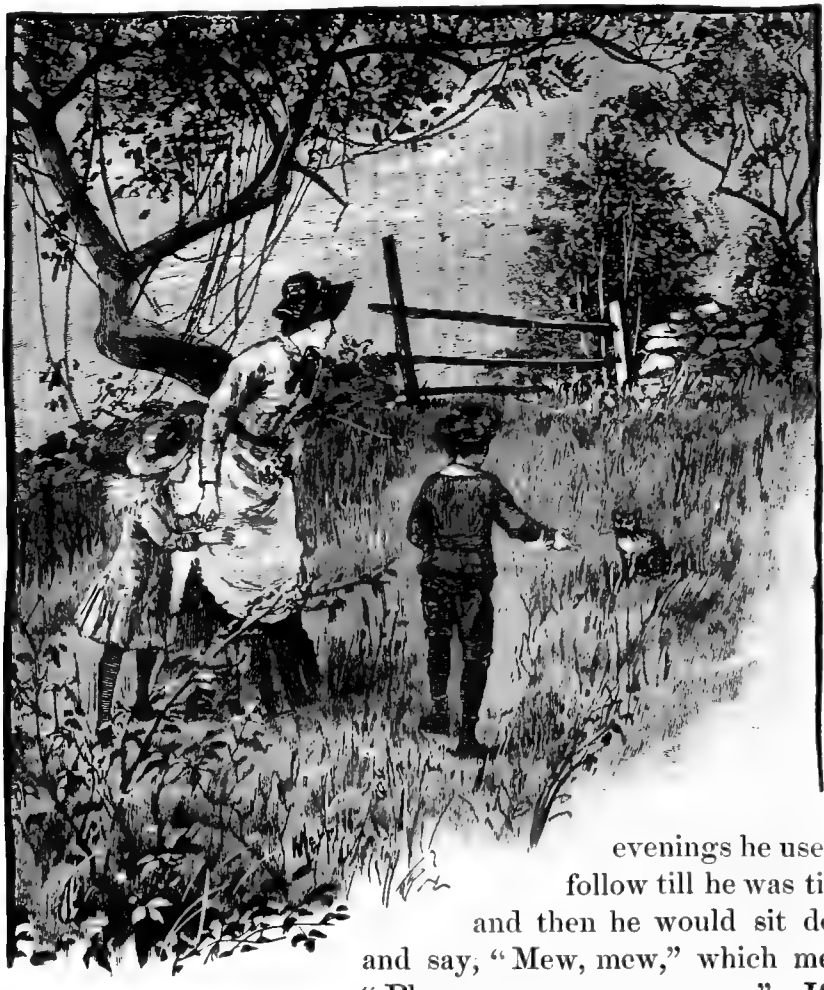
in a way that made everybody laugh. One or twice she had almost got it, and then Apple-Jack was off swifter than ever. On, on, they went, till the overhanging trees by the roadside caught the net and lifted it far out of Bridget's reach.

She was obliged to leave it waving in the wind, and it may possibly be there now. She says it's a pretty pass if she's got to lock up even the dishcloths, to keep them away from an old white horse that's "neither fit to ride, nor in the cart to draw."

SOMETHING ABOUT TOMMY.

TOMMY, as we call our cat, was born in the stable. But he did not care to stay in his nursery, with the horses. When he was quite a wee kitten he began to follow us about the garden.

As he grew stronger and bigger he would run quite a long way after us. When we went for a walk through the fields on summer



evenings he used to follow till he was tired, and then he would sit down and say, "Mew, mew," which meant "Please carry me, some one." If no one would carry him he would sit there till we came back, and then follow us to the house.

Who could help liking such a dear cat? He became such a pet that we soon took him into the house altogether. He generally sits all day long just in front of the fire when it is cold. He is very fond of auntie, and likes to sit in her lap and rub his head against her chin, and then he sings his song, "Purr, purr." At meal-times he sits close to auntie's side and watches her. When he thinks she has been eating long enough he says, "Mew," which means, "I think it's my turn now." He knows — the sly fellow! — that he will get a bit off her plate when she has done.

Tommy keeps himself very nice. He wears a gray fur coat, and a gray fur cap to match, with clean white shirt and stockings.

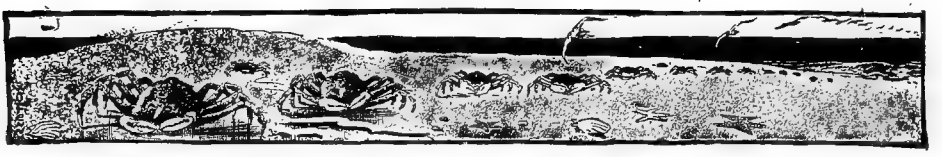
But I am sorry to say that he does not grow better as he grows older. He is very fond of catching the poor little dicky birds in the trees; but he never dares to touch the chickens, for he knows the mother-hens would peck him.

Lately Tommy has become a great thief. One day the cook was preparing some pigeons for dinner. She was called away for a minute, and when she came back one of the pigeons was gone. She guessed who was the thief, and ran out of the kitchen just in time to see Tommy jumping out of an open window, with the pigeon in his mouth.

Sometimes he fights, too. A little while ago we did not see him for two or three days. One stormy morning he came crawling in, wet through, with his fur coat all brushed the wrong way. Both

his ears were torn, and great scratches were all over his face. One eye was quite closed up, and he was so lame that he could just manage to crawl to the kitchen fire.

He scarcely left the front of the fire for days, and did not wash his face once for a whole week. But he is quite well again now, has grown very big and fat, and puts on a clean shirt every day.



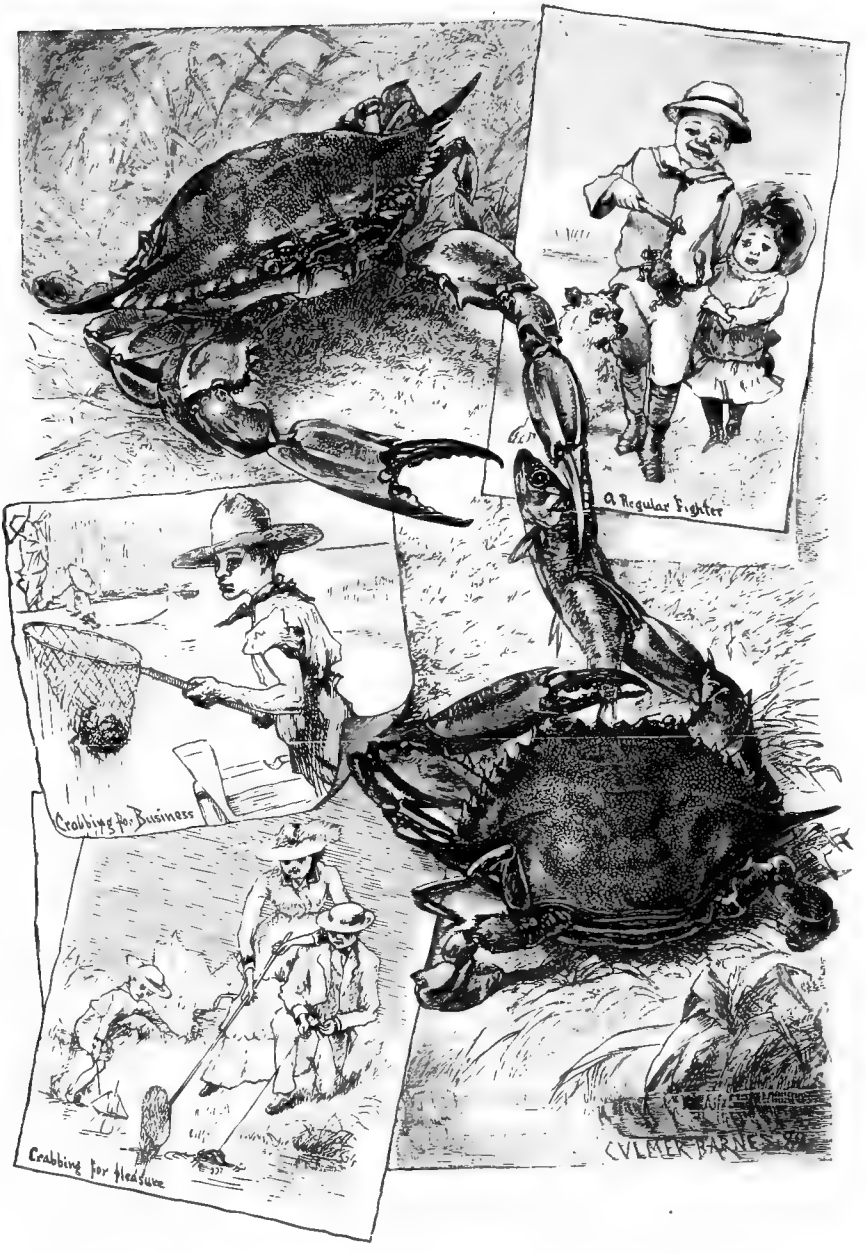
ALL KINDS OF CRABS.

If I should tell you about all the kinds of crabs in the world there would be no space left to tell of their curious habits and ways of life. So I will mention only a few.

The great red crab frightens one when he suddenly pops out of a hole under the sea-weed. There are some smaller crabs you might not notice.

Did you ever see the hermit crab? He lives alone in a shell belonging to some other shell-fish. It has been cast off, like an old shoe, and he steps in. He is very brave in his borrowed shell, but a great coward when out of it. He is one of the few that can leave his house when it is too small for him, and seek another.

The spirit crab glides over the sand so fast that you can't catch him, run as hard as you please. The funniest of all crabs is the fiddler. He lives in a little hole in the sand. He doesn't fiddle; oh! no; but there is music when he gets hold of your toes! He has two front claws, a big one and a little one. He shakes them at you as much as to say, "You dare not trouble me!" Then he dives into his hole in the sand, peeping out now and then to shake his fist.


A Regular Fighter
Crabbing for Business
Crabbing for Pleasure

See that crab on the beach! Do you wish to know whether or not he is a "regular fighter?" Don't try to find out by sticking your finger between his claws. Try him first with a stick. If he bites hard at the stick you may (if you please) tempt him with your finger.

A crab will bite at almost anything; but a toe or a finger is what he likes best to get hold of. You don't need a hook to catch him with when he is in the water. A piece of meat or fish tied to the end of a string will do. This crab doesn't know enough to let go, when he once takes hold. He will allow himself to be pulled out of the water first.

Perhaps the best of the crab family is the one that is good to eat. This is called the soft-shell crab. He is juicy and tender only when he has shed his hard covering, and before another shell is formed.

If you will go with me to the West Indies I will show you the land crabs. They live in holes in the mountains. Every year they travel down to the sea. They take this long journey in order to lay their eggs. The eggs can be hatched only on the sea-shore.

Thousands of land crabs travel together. They are like the sea crab. In the Spice Islands we may find a crab that climbs trees. It is said that he does this to get the fruit of the cocoanut-trees.

Crabs are at home everywhere near salt water. They eat anything good to eat that comes in their way. They have very small mouths, but they take a great deal of food. They fight fiercely over a dead fish. They clash their great claws and wriggle their feelers, while their bead-like eyes stick out with anger. At last one of them gets the fish. Then he crawls into a dark nook in the sea-weed, under the waves, and eats it. He doesn't know that he is getting himself ready for the market. The fatter he is, the better price will he bring. In the picture the boy with the net has an eye to business. He will sell the crabs, at a good price, by the dozen.

THE HURDLE-RACE.

Eddy and John had some pretty rabbits for pets. They were so kind to the rabbits that they became very tame, and learned some funny tricks.

By and by Eddy and John asked their friends to come and see a hurdle-race run by their rabbits. The race-course was a ditch

which the boys had made, leading from the rabbit-hutch round quite a large circle, and back.

Across the ditch, at short spaces, some little sticks were placed. When all were ready to see the race Eddy raised the door of the hutch and whistled. Out came the rabbits, hopping along as fast as they could go. They jumped over each stick as they came to it; this made it a hurdle-race, you see.

Round the course they went, and back into their house again. How the friends did laugh and clap their hands! It was a funny sight. You may be sure the boys were asked to show off their rabbit-race very often.

MRS. HUMMING–BIRD.

A TRUE STORY.

One day grandpa said to Harry and Ida, "Children, if you will come out while I am picking peas to-morrow morning, you will see something very pretty." That was all he would tell them.

They kept wondering about it every little while through the day, and made mamma promise to wake them early. I was a little curious, myself, to know what could be there at six o'clock in the morning, and at no other time.

The children were very wide awake at the appointed hour, and full of fun. Grandpa said they must be quiet, or they would frighten away his little pet.

"Won't you tell us what it is, grandpa?" cried Harry.

"Do tell us, grandpa!" chimed in Ida.

Grandpa smiled, with a teasing look in his eyes, and said, "Oh, you will soon find out for yourselves, if her royal highness favors us."

He had been at work only a few minutes, and was whistling softly to himself, when out flew the daintiest little humming-bird! Her nest was in a quince-tree, just beyond the fence.

At first she was very shy, and did not alight; but her wings

quivered in the sunshine, and showed the lovely colors. She flashed around like a bit of a rainbow, and the children were wild with delight.

Grandpa pretended not to see her, and soon she gained more courage. Then she flew back to her nest, and called her two young ones. They had just begun to use their wings, and the mother-bird coaxed them along to the pea-vines.

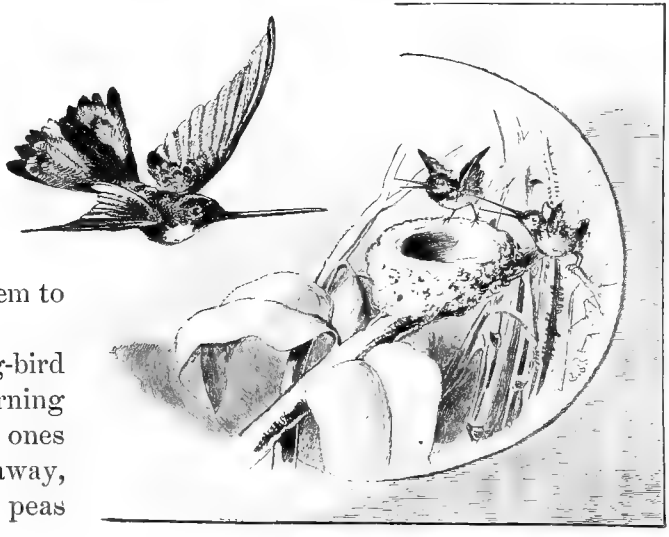
The children had a good look at them then. They were about as large as bumble-bees, only slimmer in the body. Their feathers had begun to grow, and they seemed like a mixture of red and green and gold.

The mother-bird flew away, and left her little ones near grandpa, as if she knew he would keep them from harm. In a few minutes she was back again, her bill laden with sweets, which she fed to the birdies.

She did this several times. Then she gave a little call, and flew towards the nest. The birdies soon followed her.

Grandpa said she helped the little birds along with her bill the first morning she came.

The children were delighted with grandpa's pet. They had never seen a humming-bird before, and to have one so near was an inducement for them to wake up early.



Mrs. Humming-bird came every morning until the little ones were able to fly away, and grandpa's peas were all picked.

THE ORPHAN CHICKENS.

Dick was a very large and heavy rooster. He was pure white, with wings and tail tipped with black.

A few years ago he had some grandchildren. After the mother-hen had brooded them long enough she forsook them, and went to roost with the other hens. The young ones wandered about, not knowing what to think of it. Dick saw that they were left to themselves. He stalked up to them, and spoke to them in such a fatherly way that the chickens, after a while, took refuge under his wings.

It was amusing to see how tenderly he eyed them and covered them with his large wings. They were glad of a shelter, and liked him for taking pity on them. For a long time before he had been in the habit of picking bugs and worms for them.

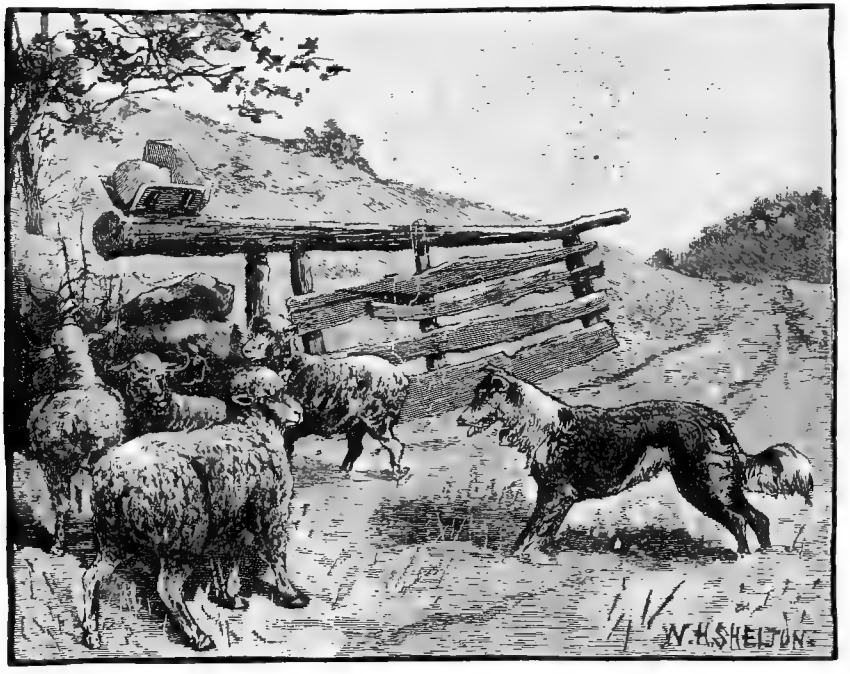
After the mother left them he fed them better still, and they followed him all day. Every night they crept close to him, or under his wings. Was he not good to the orphans? We always liked him better after that. Dick was very tame. He would eat from our hands at any time, and allow us to lift him whenever we chose. We kept him till he was old and lame; and when he died some genuine tears were shed by one who loved him.

A WISE DOG.

HARRY had gone to the country to make a visit. He was sitting on the porch, talking with Farmer Hughes, when the farmer said,

"Isn't it about time you brought up those cows?" Harry was used to being called upon to help everybody at home; but as this was his first visit to the farm-house he felt a little surprised at being

told to bring up the cows. However, he started to go; but the farmer kept on talking so busily to him that he could not get away without being impolite. He sat down to wait till the end of the



farmer's story. Pretty soon Harry saw the cows coming up, and a gray shepherd dog driving them.

"Oh!" said he; "I understand now. You told the dog to go for the cows. I thought you meant me."

Farmer Hughes laughed. "You must have thought we were in a hurry to set our visitors at work. Nero knew whom I meant. He was in the kitchen, and went out the back door."

"Is his name Nero? It seems a shame to call a nice, innocent dog by that name."

Harry had been reading history, and had learned about a wicked emperor named Nero, who used to burn Christians to light his garden.

"Yes," said the farmer; "but he doesn't care. The dog is so

intelligent and good that it makes us quite like the name of Nero. He understands everything. Nero, bring up that lamb."

Nero walked quietly away, and soon came back driving a lamb before him.

"Now, bring the sheep." And he brought them. In a little while the sheep started back to the fields. "You would better hold those sheep, Nero," said the farmer. And Nero went out and placed himself in the gate, and kept the sheep in the yard.

"Do you believe a dog can tell one color from another?" asked the farmer.

"Oh, no!" replied Harry.

"Nero can. I have two red and two spotted oxen. And he will bring the one or the other, as I tell him. Nero, bring up the red oxen."

Away went Nero, and soon came back driving a red ox and a spotted ox before him.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Harry. "I thought he couldn't tell color."

"Nero," said the farmer, sternly, "what did you bring that spotted ox for? I told you the red ones. Now, take that spotted one back and bring the other red one."

Nero looked very much ashamed of his blunder. He hastened to take the spotted ox back to the field, at a good canter, and quickly came back with the other red one.

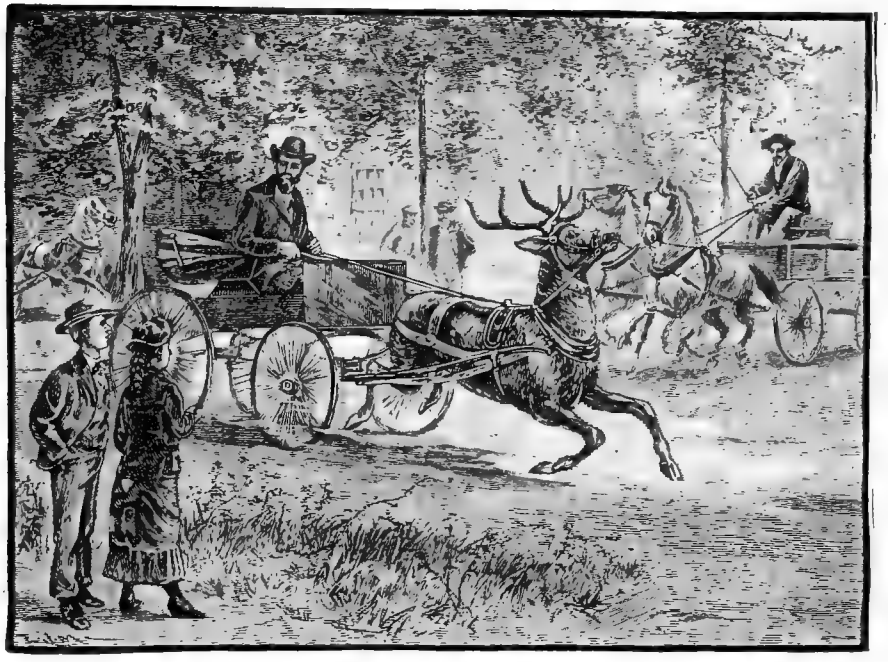
THE TAME DEER.

A FEW years ago some men were hunting for deer on the prairies of Nebraska. One day they shot a doe, which had two young ones with her.

The young deer, or fawns, were so frightened that they did not know which way to go. One of them ran right up to the hunters and was caught. One of the men, whose name was Gray, took the fawn home and kept him. He soon got quite tame, and would go to his master when called.

As soon as he was fully grown a harness was made for him, and he was taught to draw a buggy like a horse.

It was a curious sight to see Mr. Gray riding through the streets of the village in a carriage drawn by such a queer-looking horse. It not only attracted the attention of the people, but the horses, as they passed, would look very shyly at the deer's long horns.

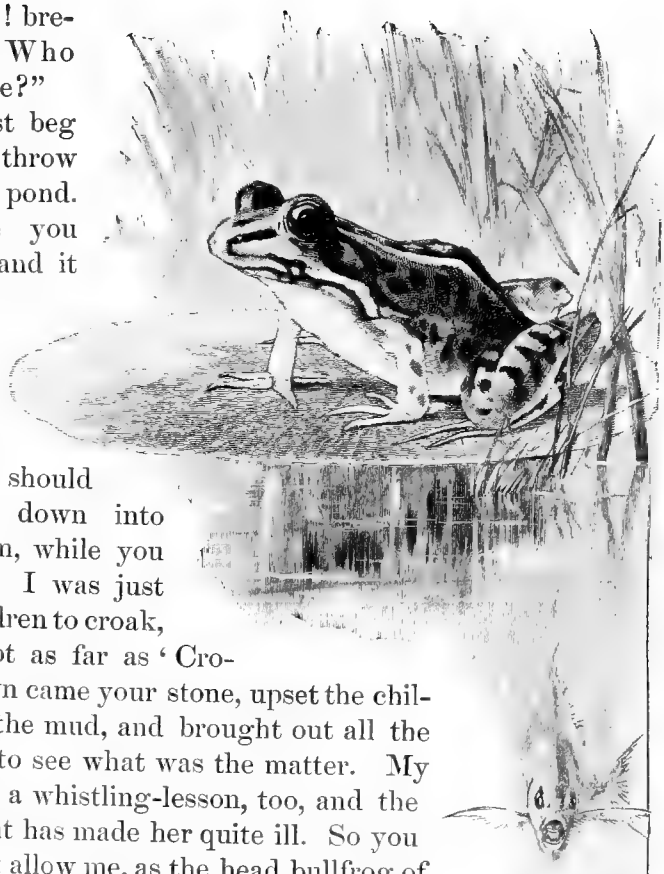


Some of them were frightened. Mr. Gray had two children, a boy and a girl, who learned to drive the deer, and who grew to be very fond of him.

One night the people were awakened from their sleep by the cry of "Fire! Fire!" and the ringing of bells all over the village. The fire proved to be in Mr. Gray's stable, and had burned so much before it was seen that it could not be put out.

The poor deer was tied in the stable; he could not get away, and was burned to ashes in the flames. The children mourned over their loss for a long time. Every one felt sorry, for the tame deer was well known all over the village, and had become a great favorite.

PROFESSOR BULLFROG.

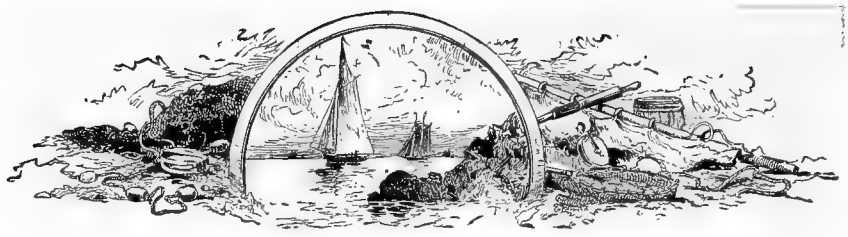


"COAX! coax! breke-ke-kex! Who threw that stone?"

"I really must beg you, boys, *not* to throw stones into this pond. It cannot give you much pleasure, and it does me a great deal of harm."

"How?"

"Well, how would you like it if a great rock should come 'plump' down into your school-room, while you were at school? I was just teaching the children to croak, and they had got as far as 'Crodunk,' when down came your stone, upset the children, stirred up the mud, and brought out all the fish in the pond to see what was the matter. My wife was giving a whistling-lesson, too, and the fright has made her quite ill. So you must allow me, as the head bullfrog of the pond, to forbid your throwing any more stones here."



SHIP AHOY!

"SHIP ahoy! What ship's that?"
"The Physalie."
"Whither bound?
"Wherever she pleases."
"Under whose orders?"
"The King of Portugal."

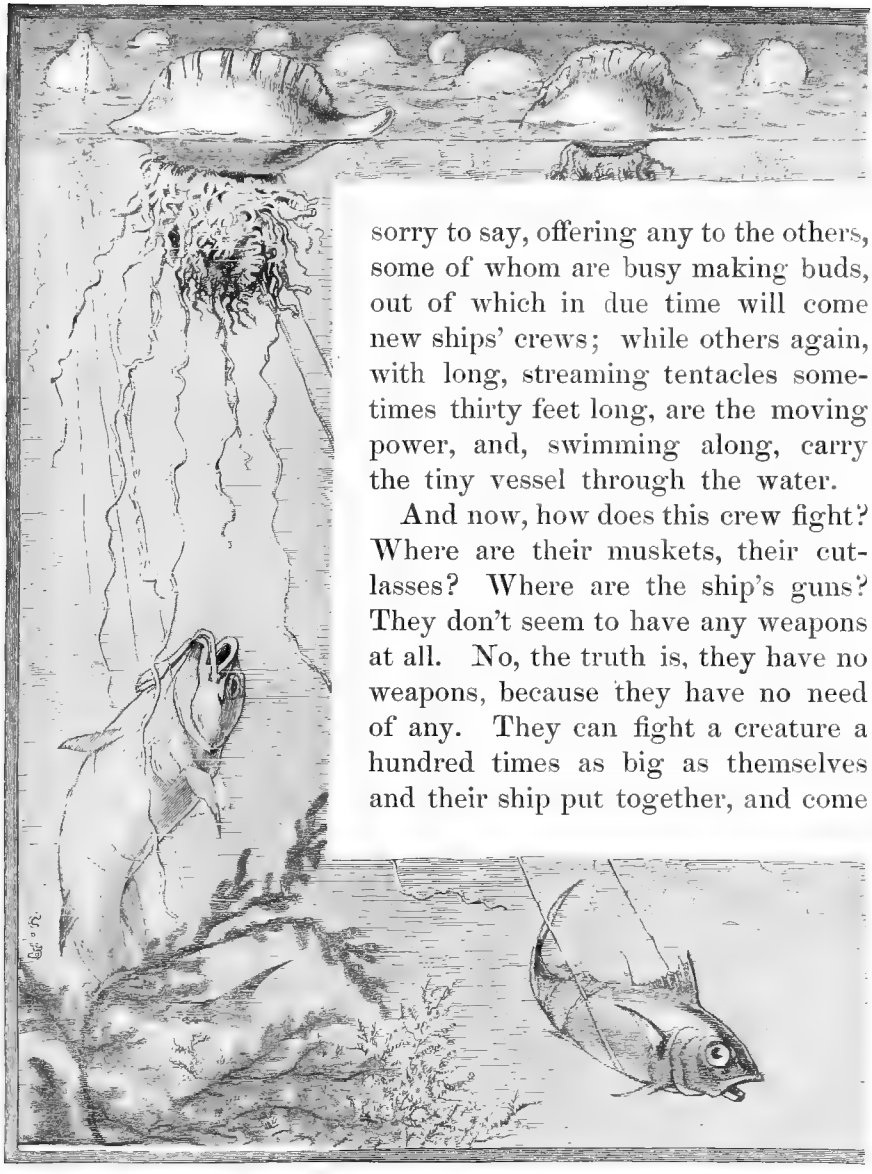
Look at the ship, children! You do not see her? There she is, in the picture. She may not look exactly like the ships you are accustomed to seeing, but for all that she is a ship of the line, all manned and equipped and ready for action.

She is a tight and trim vessel, and sails, I take it for granted, under the orders of the King of Portugal; at least, she is always called a Portuguese man-of-war. Very trim she is, and very compact, too, for you could hold her in your hand, as far as her size is concerned. If you should *try* to hold her in your hand, however, you would very quickly find out *one* reason for her being called a man-of-war, though perhaps it is not the reason generally given.

You see all those delicate curling threads and tendrils that hang from the beautiful shell-shaped bubble which floats so lightly on the water? They are the crew of the good ship Physalie.

Instead of being different parts of one creature they are themselves creatures, distinct and separate, and yet all living together in such perfect harmony and peace that they seem to belong to one body.

Each member of the crew has his place and his work. Some spend their time in catching food, and eating it, without, I am



sorry to say, offering any to the others, some of whom are busy making buds, out of which in due time will come new ships' crews; while others again, with long, streaming tentacles sometimes thirty feet long, are the moving power, and, swimming along, carry the tiny vessel through the water.

And now, how does this crew fight? Where are their muskets, their cutlasses? Where are the ship's guns? They don't seem to have any weapons at all. No, the truth is, they have no weapons, because they have no need of any. They can fight a creature a hundred times as big as themselves and their ship put together, and come

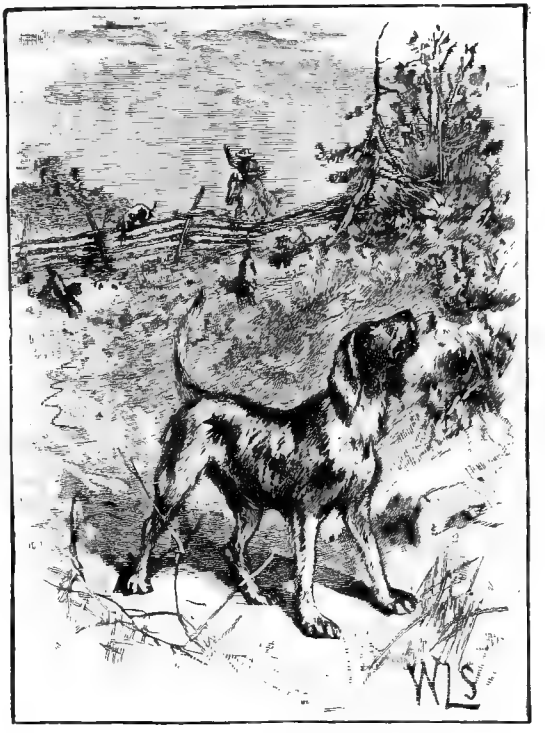
off victorious, with flying colors. I will tell you a story which a gentleman told me once, about his meeting a Portuguese man-of-war; then you will understand all about it.

He was living at the time on one of the islands in the West Indies, and used to go in bathing every morning. One morning he had been swimming about for nearly an hour in the clear warm water, watching all the strange and beautiful creatures which were also taking a morning swim, and thinking how pleasant it must be to be a fish. At last he floated on his back, and let a great, curling, white-crested wave carry him to the shore. Now, this same wave was bringing a whole fleet of "galleys," as the natives call the Physalie, in from the open sea, and just as Mr. La Blond touched the shore one of the galleys touched his arm, and instantly grappled it, flinging round his shoulder its beautiful streamers of crimson, pink, and pale blue. He felt a thousand sharp, darting pains, so intense that he grew dizzy. Exerting all his strength, he tore the Physalie off and flung it into the sea; but some of the thread-like tendrils remained glued to his arm, and he nearly fainted away with the pain. He managed to get some oil, and swallowed some, and rubbed his arm with the rest; but it was some hours before the pain left him, and he was not well until the next day.

So you see the tiny man-of-war is not so innocent as it looks; and if it can so powerfully affect a man, just think what a hard time the little fishes must have, when they meet a fleet, or even a single vessel! They just curl up their little tails and die in despair, and the heartless crew of the galley make a meal of them.

UNCLE JACK'S PACK OF HOUNDS.

Did you ever hear a pack of hounds? Such a noise as they make! They can beat anything for noise, except boys just let loose from school.



Uncle Jack More has five or six fine fox-hounds. When he goes out to hunt he takes his hounds. They start on a run, with their noses to the ground. When one of them scents the track of a deer, a fox, or any other animal, he raises a cry, and then the whole pack start on the trail, making the woods ring with their cries.

The hounds are very gentle, and are great pets with all the children who live near.

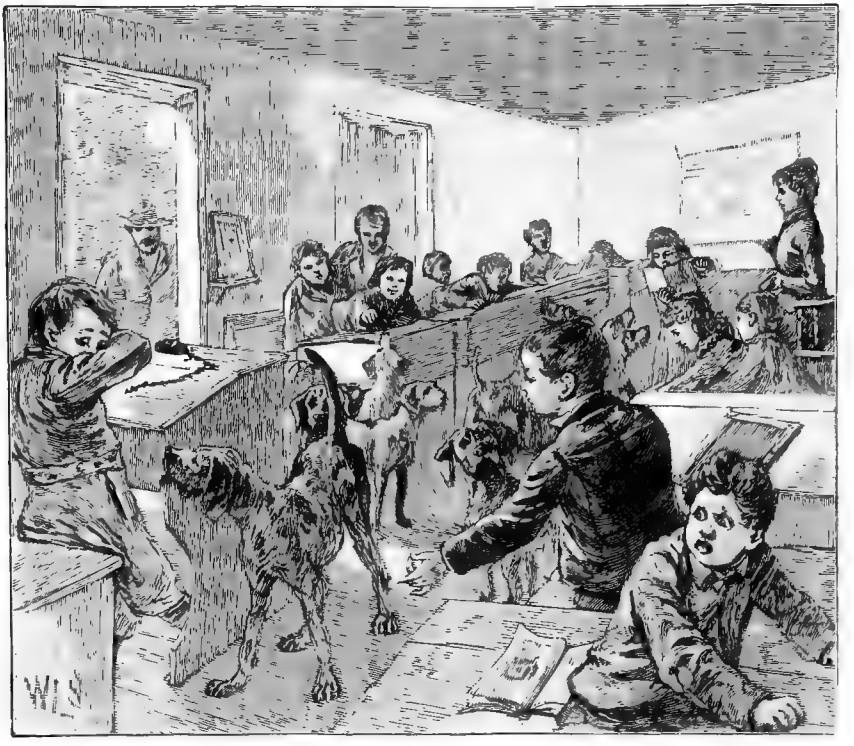
Uncle Jack has a friend living eight miles distant. He often makes him a visit with his hounds, and one day when he was coming home he had a funny time. I must tell you the story.

Right on his road home stands our new white school-house, and school had just begun for the summer. We had a pretty, young teacher, who was a stranger to all of us, and had never heard of hounds. Uncle Jack was riding with a neighbor. As they came near the school-house he called the hounds up into the wagon.

"If they strike the track of the children they will go straight to school," he said.

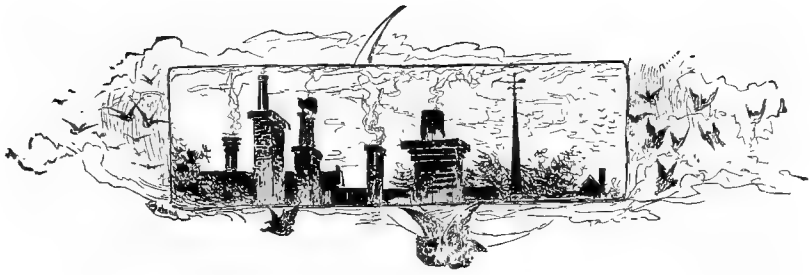
They rode along, but did not see that one of the dogs had jumped down, and was running under the wagon.

"To-o-o-too to-o-ot!" said he; and all the other hounds jumped after him. Away they went, baying at the top of their voices. Nothing could stop them now. They had found the track of their little playmates. Happy dogs! The school-house door was open, and in they went. You never heard such a noise as they made.



The little school-mistress was brave. She did not scream or faint, but she was sadly frightened, for she had never seen a pack of hounds before. She did not know that dogs could make so much noise. They went all round the school-room, wagging their tails against the desks, delighted to see everybody once more.

Poor Uncle Jack had the worst of it. He had to come into school with his riding-whip, to drive them out.



MADAM OWL AND THE CHICKENS.

"Two chickens last night, and one the night before!" I exclaimed. "This must certainly be stopped, Thomas, or we shall have no chickens left. What do you think has killed them,—a dog, or a cat, or a hawk?"

"Well, ma'am," said Thomas, "I think it is a hawk; but if you will give me a piece of mosquito-netting I can very soon find out."

So I brought a piece of netting, and Thomas fastened it over the top of the large, open coop in which the chickens lived. The next morning I went out early, to see if the hawk was caught, and there, instead of a hawk, was a brown owl, fluttering about, beating her wings against the net, and rolling her great yellow eyes wildly. Her hooked talons were entangled in the meshes of the net, and she could neither get out nor in; but she was making a terrible commotion, and the little chickens and their mother were frightened nearly to death, and cowered, trembling, and "peeping," in the farthest corner of the coop.

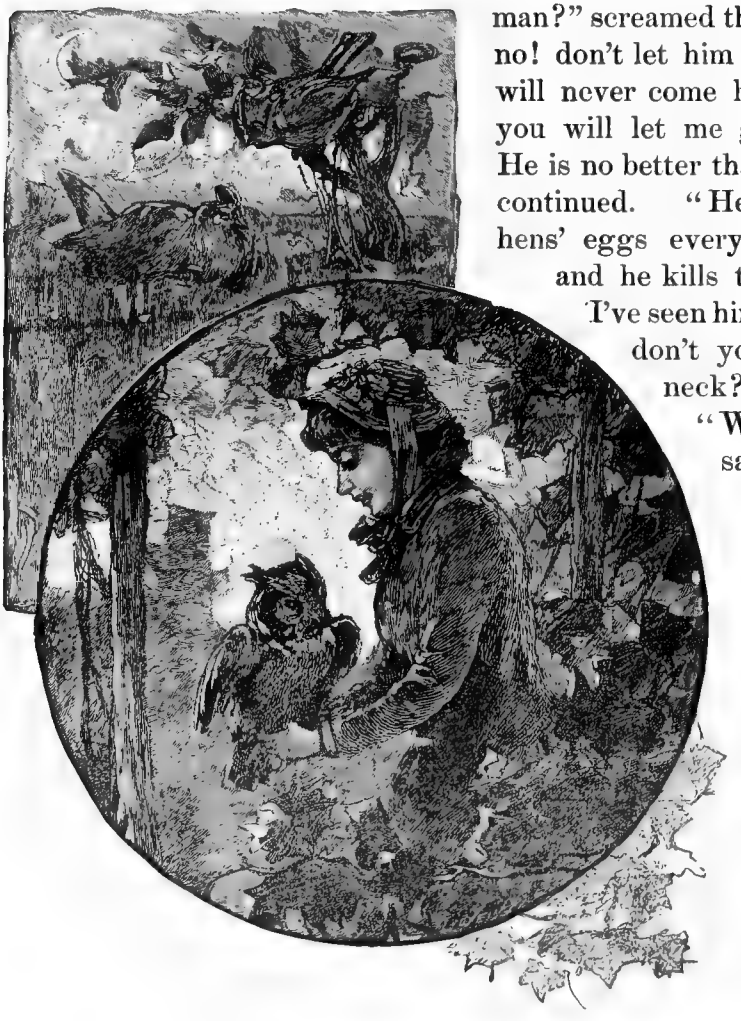
"Well, madam," I said; "so I have caught you at last. What do you mean by stealing my chickens?"

"I have a large family, ma'am," replied the owl, "and must have some food for them. You would not have me neglect my children, would you?"

"Certainly not," I said. "But you ought to be able to maintain your children honestly, without stealing. My hens do not steal."

"Begging your pardon," said the owl, "they *do* steal! That speckled hen stole six worms this morning from the old lame drake; that's *mean*, that is,—*I* wouldn't steal from a lame bird!"

"You seem to know a great deal about my poultry-yard," I said. "Suppose you stay at home in future, and find something else besides my chickens to feed your young ones with. On that condition I will let you go, but otherwise I shall be obliged to get Thomas to wring your neck."



"What, that great horrid man?" screamed the owl. "No! no! don't let him touch me! I will never come here again, if you will let me go this time. He is no better than I am," she continued. "He steals the hens' eggs every single day; and he kills the hens, too! I've seen him do it. Why don't you wring *his* neck?"

"Well! well!" I said, not quite knowing what to reply to this turning of the tables; for Thomas certainly *did* take the eggs and kill the hens, and I and my children certainly ate them. "Well! well!

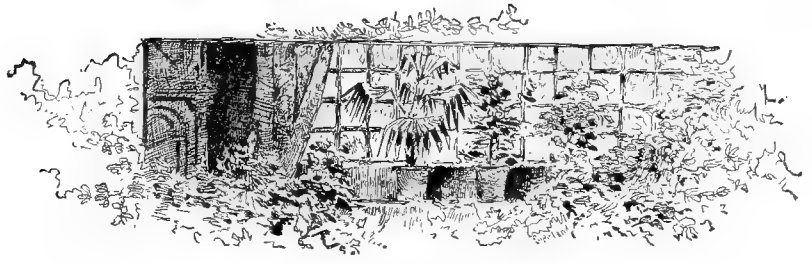
Mrs. Owl, there is a great difference in the cases, though you may not be able to see it."

"I do *not* see it, I assure you!" cried Mrs. Owl, ruffling her feathers angrily.

"And therefore," I continued, as I disentangled her claws from the net, "I will only say, without further argument, Good-by!"

"Good-by!" cried the brown owl, as she spread her broad wings and sailed away. "Tu-whoo! tu-whit! Good-by, ma'am! Did you ever taste chickens yourself? I suppose not. Tu-whoo!"

Now, wasn't she an impudent bird?



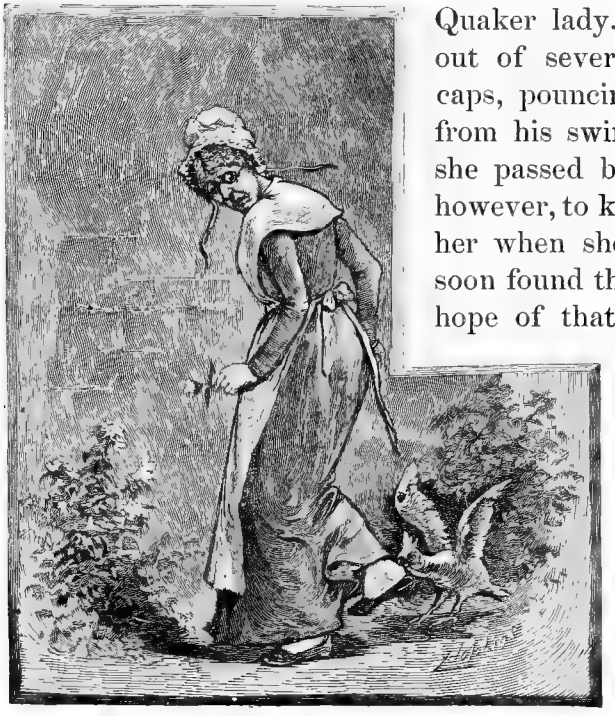
ZACK, THE COCKATOO.

ZACK was a cockatoo. He was snow-white, with a yellow crest; and what was left of his tail was yellow, but that was only two feathers, for the cat had bitten off the rest.

He could say several words. What he said oftenest was, "Poor cockatoo! Poor cockatoo!" in a pleading voice. We used to lift him upon a finger, and he would give us a kiss by placing his open bill close to our lips and moving his little tongue back and forth. He was not a good bird, though, and we were always afraid of his kisses.

When very angry he would spread his wings and tap his hard bill on the floor, and his crest would stand up and open like a fan.

Instead of walking in the usual way he would hop like a frog, screeching all the while in a horrid way.



Zack took a dislike to a dear Quaker lady. He tore the crown out of several of her nice white caps, pouncing down on her head from his swinging perch whenever she passed by. She soon learned, however, to keep her eyes all around her when she passed him, and he soon found there was no longer any hope of that kind of fun. So he slipped up behind her one day, while she bent over to pluck a flower, and bit her heel. The harder she shook her foot the harder he bit and flapped his wings, until, by and by, some one came and took him away.

One lady in the house had a number of cats. Once when she went out to call them to dinner a voice above her head cried out, just as she opened her lips, "Kitty, Kitty, Kitty!" She looked up astonished to see the old cockatoo peeping roguishly down through the grape-vine leaves.

MACHINES THAT CREEP AND FLY.

Did you know that all the silk in the world is made by very little worms? These creatures have a machine for spinning it. They wind the silk, too, as well as spin it. The curious cocoons

the worms make are wound with the silk. Men take them to factories, where they are unwound and made into the beautiful silks you and your mother wear.

The spider is also a spinner. His thread is much finer than the silk-worm's. It is made up of a great many threads, just like a rope of many strands. This is the spider's rope that he walks on. He often swings on it, too, to see how strong it is. Did you ever see a spider drop from some high place? How his spinning-machine must work!

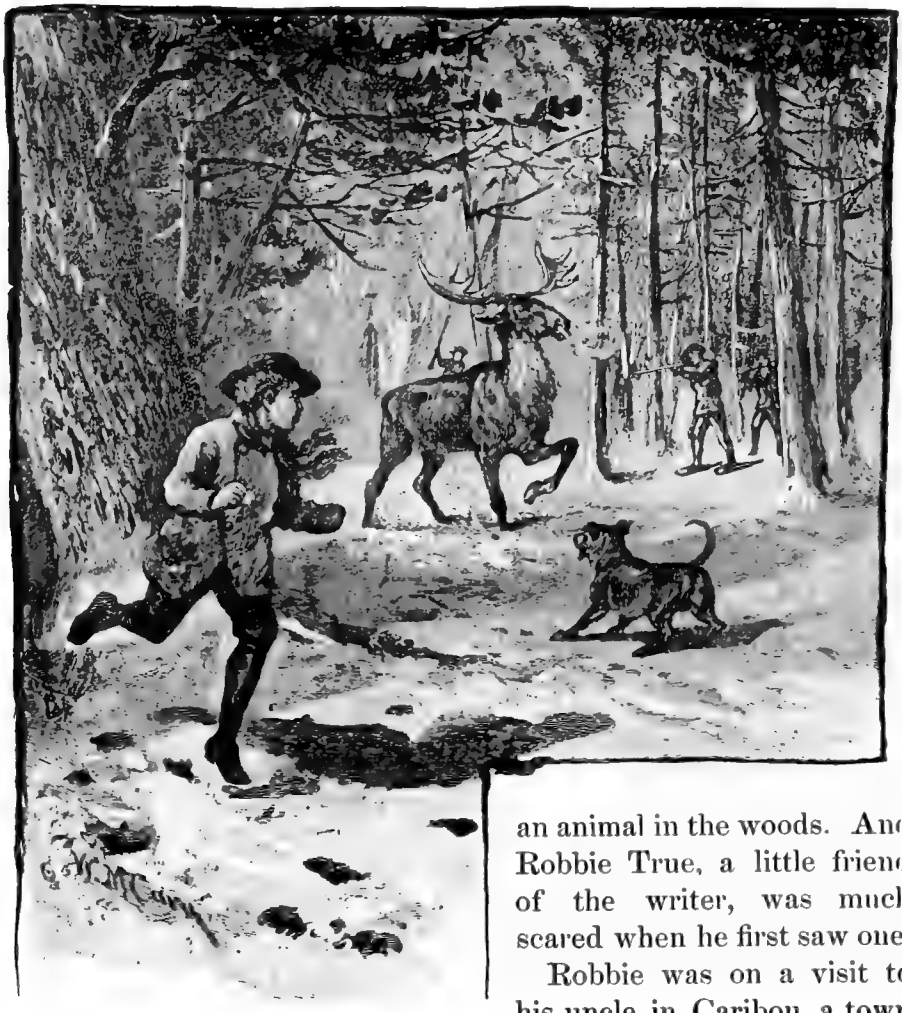
The wasp makes his paper nest out of fibres of wood. He picks them off with his strange little teeth, given him for the purpose, and gathers them into a neat bundle.

When he has enough he makes them into a soft pulp in some strange way. This pulp is very much like that used by men in making our paper. Very likely the wasps taught them how, because they are the oldest paper-makers in the world. This pulp he weaves into the paper that forms his nest. You must look for one, and see how much it is like the common brown paper we use to wrap bundles in. The wasps work together, so that it takes but a very little time to build a nest.

ROBBIE AND THE MOOSE.

THE moose, which is now never seen except in Northern Maine, is a strange-looking animal. He is large, with great, spreading horns, and is very ungraceful and clumsy.

Most little boys and girls would be frightened to meet so queer



an animal in the woods. And Robbie True, a little friend of the writer, was much scared when he first saw one.

Robbie was on a visit to his uncle in Caribou, a town near the border of Maine. One clear morning in March Robbie and his dog Scott went out of doors to walk on the hard crust that had formed on the snow.

They walked to a large forest, not far from the house, where Robbie had set a trap for a rabbit. He was looking in the trap, to see if one of the little fellows was there, when he heard a noise not far away. The sound was like something breaking through the snow. Suddenly a large animal came in sight, panting and almost tired out, for he broke through the crust at every step. Robbie was frightened and ran toward home, but Scott stopped to bark at the tired animal.

Robbie had run but a little way when he heard men shouting, and turned about to see what it meant. He saw three hunters with guns, a little way behind the moose. They wore snow-shoes, and were running quite fast.

Soon the men got nearer to the moose, when the animal turned and stood up on its hind legs. If the hunters came too near he was going to defend himself with his fore feet.

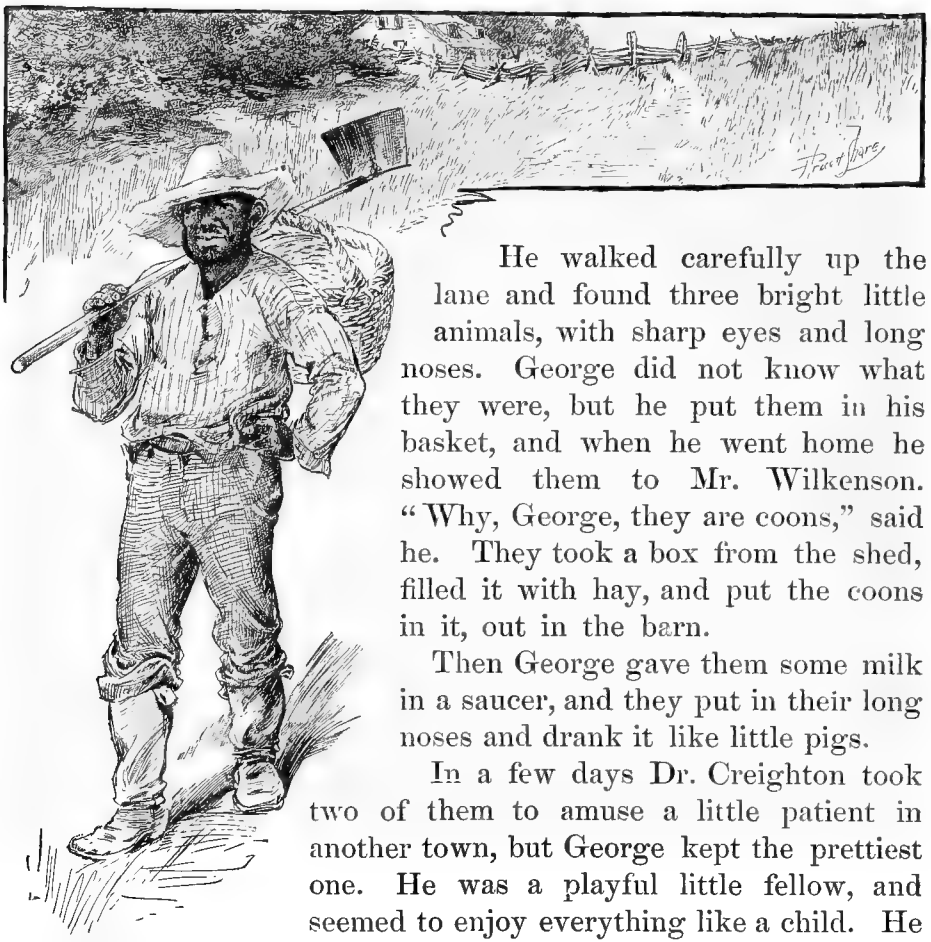
While the moose was in this position Robbie saw one of the men take aim with his gun. A loud report followed, and the poor animal fell on the hard crust, dead.

Robbie gave a little cry of pain, and, calling Scott, quickly ran home.

He told his uncle of the strange animal he had seen, larger than a cow, with great horns, and that it had been shot by a hunter. His uncle told him it was a moose.

DUSKY GEORGE AND HIS COON.

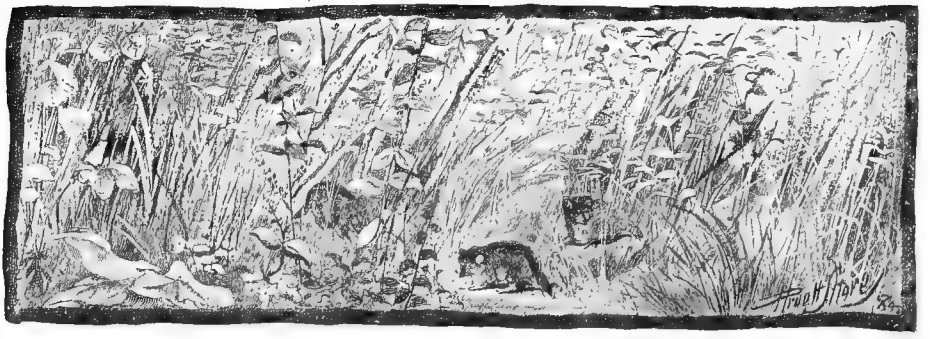
MR. WILKENSON had a colored man called Dusky George. One day he sent him to the field behind the mill to dig some potatoes. George started with the hoe over his shoulder and the basket swinging on it. Just before he reached the field he saw something moving in the grass. He said to himself, "That's a woodchuck. I wish I had my dog Sam."



He walked carefully up the lane and found three bright little animals, with sharp eyes and long noses. George did not know what they were, but he put them in his basket, and when he went home he showed them to Mr. Wilkenson. "Why, George, they are coons," said he. They took a box from the shed, filled it with hay, and put the coons in it, out in the barn.

Then George gave them some milk in a saucer, and they put in their long noses and drank it like little pigs.

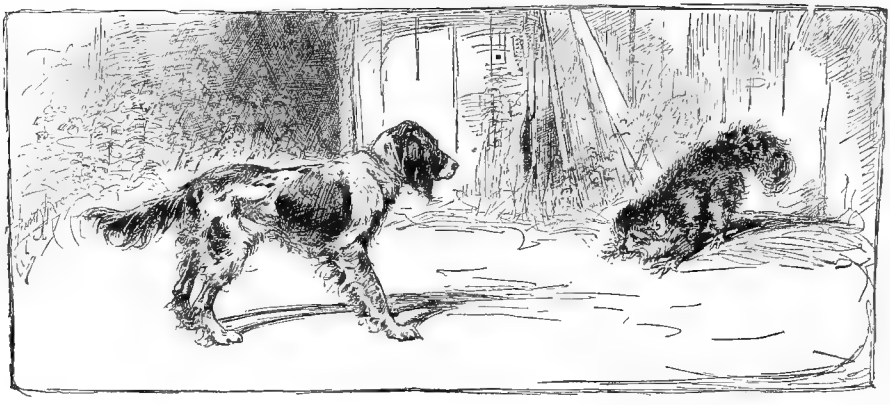
In a few days Dr. Creighton took two of them to amuse a little patient in another town, but George kept the prettiest one. He was a playful little fellow, and seemed to enjoy everything like a child. He did not like strange dogs. When one came into the yard he would back into a corner and spit like a cat, if he did not have



time to hide. The dog Sam soon learned to protect the coon, and took him into his bed at night.

The little creature made many friends among the neighbors, and one enemy. A lady set a custard pie on her door-step to cool, and Mr. Coon found it in his travels and ate it up. This lady did not like him.

His greatest pleasure was to ride. If he saw any one harnessing the horse he would climb to the seat and wait patiently until all



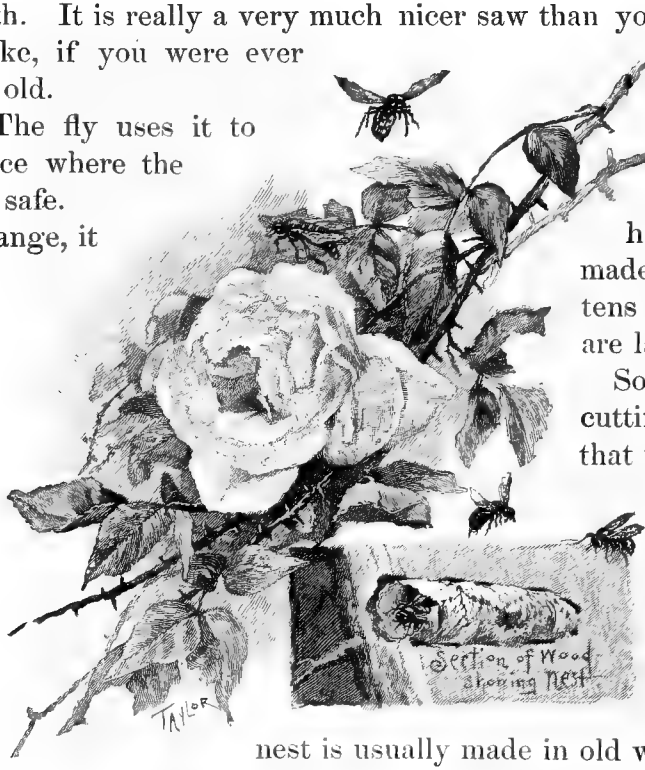
was ready. His most famous ride was when he went to the city. Dusky George harnessed the horse to the sleigh for Mr. Wilkenson. When he was ready the little coon was ready, too. When they reached the principal street Mr. Wilkenson went into a fur store, taking the coon under his arm. The man said, "Let us put him in the window." They did so; and as it was a bright, sunny day the coon lay down on a bear-skin, and in a few minutes was fast asleep. A crowd soon gathered around, and it was amusing to hear the children wondering whether he was alive or not. There was quite a shout among them when, all at once, the coon yawned and turned over.

The longest day has an end, and the coon at last reached home. I believe he has never been to the city since.

LITTLE CARPENTERS WITH WINGS.

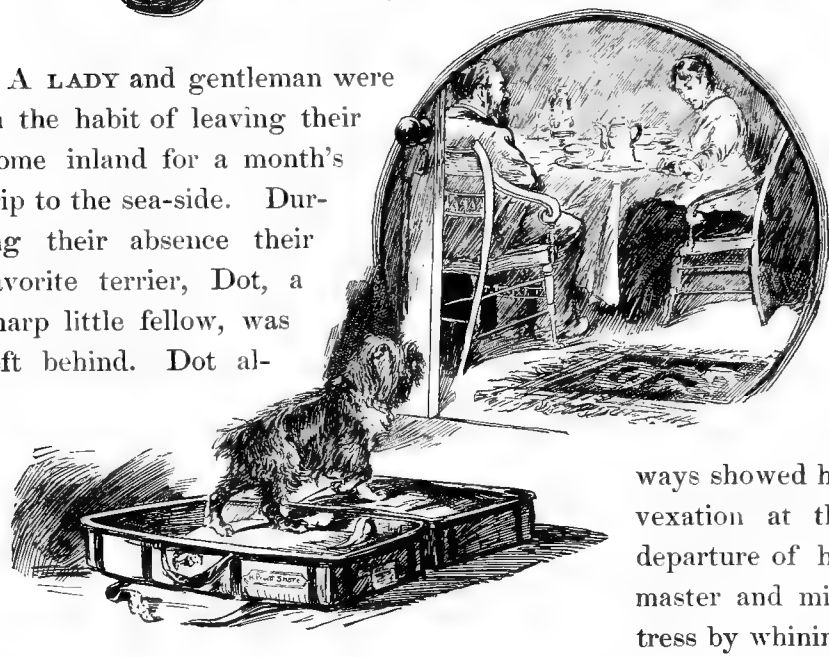
I WONDER if you know that the smallest insects you see about you have tools given to them to do their work with? There is a little fly called a saw-fly, because it has a saw to work with. It is really a very much nicer saw than you could make, if you were ever so old.

The fly uses it to make a place where the eggs will be safe. What is more strange, it has a sort of home-made glue, which fastens them where they are laid.



Some insects have cutting instruments, that work just as your scissors do. The poppy-bee is one of them, whose work is wonderful. This bee has a boring tool, too. Its nest is usually made in old wood. This borer cleans out the nest ready for use. When all is ready the insect cuts out pieces of leaves to line the nest and to make the cells. These linings are cut in the shape of the cells. You would be surprised to see the care taken to have every piece of just the right size, so that it will fit. When they are fitted, the pieces are nicely fastened together and put into the nest.

Dot and the Portmanteau



A LADY and gentleman were in the habit of leaving their home inland for a month's trip to the sea-side. During their absence their favorite terrier, Dot, a sharp little fellow, was left behind. Dot always showed his vexation at the departure of his master and mistress by whining and barking. Until the carriage was out of sight he was not kept in-doors without some trouble.

One summer, when the lady was getting ready for the usual trip, she noticed Dot seated in the portmanteau, which was lying open in readiness to be packed. Dot refused to leave the valise, and remained in it during dinner-time. No offers of food could tempt him to get out, and it was not till he had fallen asleep that he was removed. Every year Dot thus took possession of the portmanteau, which he evidently thought was the cause of the departure of his master and mistress.

SHUFFLE, THE BABY  .

A QUEER name for a baby.

But this baby was an infant alligator. One of the "Pike-nose family," and a native of Florida.

Mamma alligators build their nests among tall reeds by the banks of rivers, or shallow ponds. The nests look like small tents, about four feet high. First, mamma alligator makes a circle on the ground about as large round as a wagon-wheel.

A mud floor is smoothed over this circle. As soon as it is hard she packs on it as many eggs as she can crowd together. They are larger than a hen's egg, and have very hard shells. Then comes a second mud floor, a little smaller than the first, and more eggs; and so on, until the peak of her house is reached, and there is no more room.

Sometimes a hundred eggs are in one house. Mamma alligator keeps careful watch over them. She fights if enemies come near. Baby alligators follow the mother in water just as ducks swim out after their mothers.

When baby alligators lie on the shore in the sunshine they whine and yelp like little dogs. At first they are not very strong. If large birds peck at them, or ugly turtles poke them, they cry out for the mother.

One day a mamma alligator went off fishing, and a black boy caught one of her babies. It was about six inches long. He sold the little creature to a lady. Master Pike-nose slipped about the house easily, but was awkward running on the ground. So, in fun, he was called Shuffle. He had a small bath-tub for his home. There he was happy, and every one petted him.

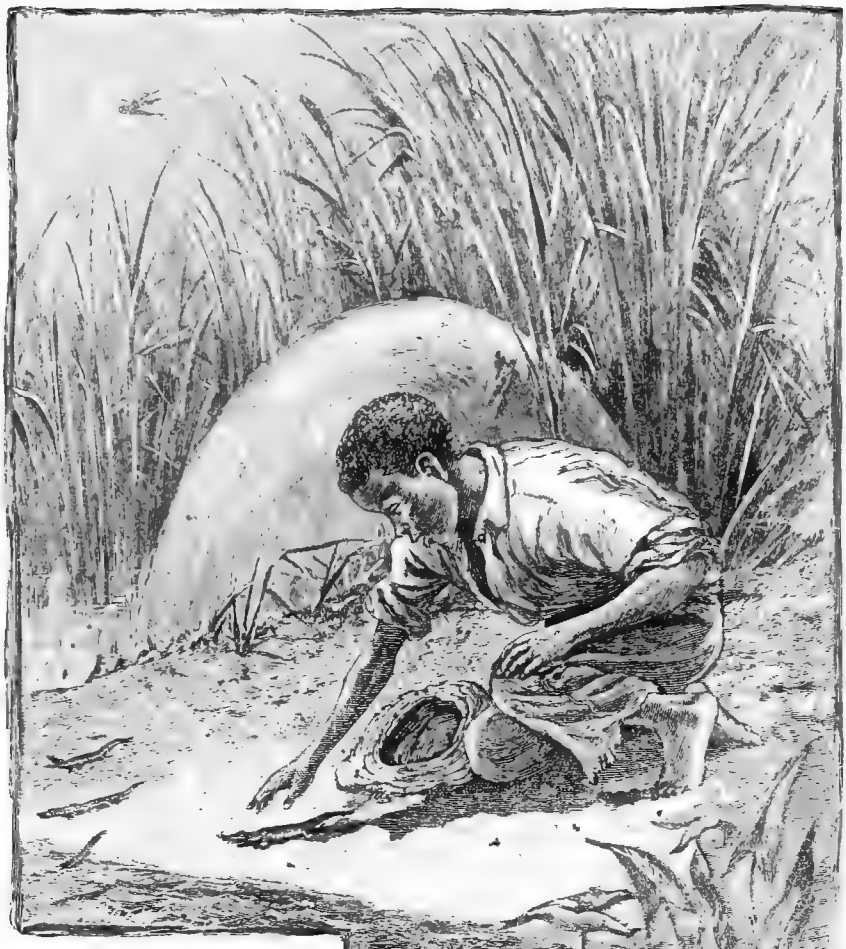
On day Shuffle was missing. Oh, what hunting there was! All the boarders looked through closets, and under beds and sofas.

Nothing was heard of Shuffle all night.

Little Daisy Fenn, waking early, peeped through the bars of her crib.

"O mamma! — see, the paper is moving!" she cried.

"In the fireplace," added Jack. "See, see!"



"Ha, ha, I see his nose," said mamma, now wide awake. Master Pike-nose popped out, quite as much surprised as any one.

It did not take long to catch the rogue and put him into his bath-tub home. "Just to think of it," said

all in a breath; "we all slept in the room with an alligator,—a free alligator!"

"And nobody was hurt," added Jack. "That's the funny part of it."

Shuffle was a very small eater. A bit of raw beef, the size of a pin-head, fastened to a quill, was given him. This was all he wished for a day, and sometimes he would not eat even that. Old alligators go whole days without food.

In the spring, when Jack returned to his Northern home, he brought Shuffle with him in a box, a present from the landlady.

SCAMP AND THE FAT WOMAN.

I WENT to a funny place yesterday. My master and his sister, with a couple of young friends, went also. He walked up to a window and paid some money, and a man inside gave him four tickets. My master then took me in his arms, and we all went inside the building.

My master carried me upstairs into a large hall, where there was a great crowd, with many funny things to see. The girls all laughed when we got in front of a high box; my master called it a platform. On this box was seated a great, big woman. She was enormously fat. Next to her was a thin man. I heard one of the

girls say to one of the others, "Just look at the fat woman and the skeleton." I felt very much like barking, and taking a bit out of her big arm.

The woman smiled when she saw me, and said, "What a pretty pug!" Then my master put me on the platform, and the fat woman took me up in her arms. Goodness me! I was lost! I could not see anything, for the fat woman laid me in her lap, and began to pat me with her big, fat hands. Every time she let her hand fall I thought I should be crushed.

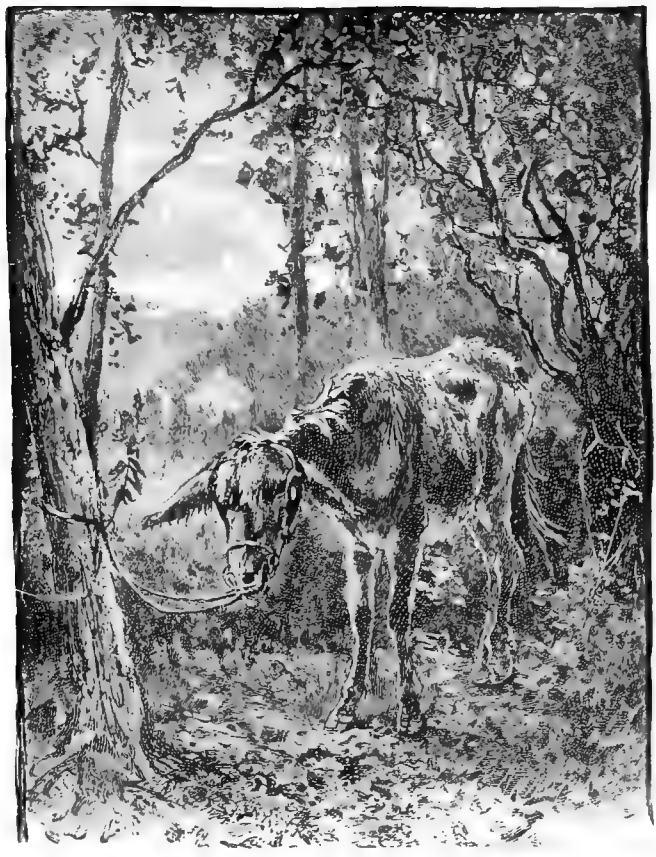
The skeleton moved his chair close up to the fat woman, and he, too, began to pat me. Once his arm came near my mouth. I did not know it was his arm, it was so thin, so I opened my mouth and began to bite it.

You should have heard the fat woman laugh. Why, she shook so it almost made me sea-sick. The poor skeleton could not do a thing. I had his arm in my mouth; and the fat woman was laughing so she raised me up and down every time she shook. Of course the skeleton had to get up and sit down every time I went up or down.

At last the thin man got tired. He was so weak he could not lift up his other arm, and he began to yell. This brought a crowd, and my master called to me, "Scamp! Scamp! What are you doing?" I let go the skeleton's arm, and the poor fellow fell over backwards. The fat woman only laughed the more when she saw him fall.

My master tried to get me away, but the fat woman begged him to let me stay and eat some cake. Oh! What a quantity of cake she gave me! It tasted better than the skeleton's arm, and I ate a good deal.

At last my master said he must go; and when we went downstairs he told me I was so badly behaved he would never take me to the museum again. I don't want to go, except to get some more cake.



OUR JENNY.

Our Jenny was a small brown donkey, which we used to torment with kindness. She had long, brown, shaggy hair, and we often combed it with a curry-comb; but Jenny was always dusty.

We had a little buggy, painted green, just light enough for her to draw, and three or four of us would get into it at once. Then poor Jenny had a hard time, for she had to draw us up and down the road until we were tired.

They call donkeys patient; but they are obstinate, too. Jenny would take it into her head to stand still, and then nothing would make her go. We might push, and whip, and call to her. Nothing

would do; she would only shake her long ears now and then, as if she would say, "I hear you, but I don't heed."

Sometimes we used to ride on her back, and then, if an obstinate fit came over her, she would do something worse than to shake her ears. She would go up to the first wall or fence she saw, and coolly rub us against it till we tumbled off on the ground. Then she would give a little snort of triumph, turn round, and trot quietly off to the stable. Wasn't that a pretty trick?

A MOVING NURSERY.

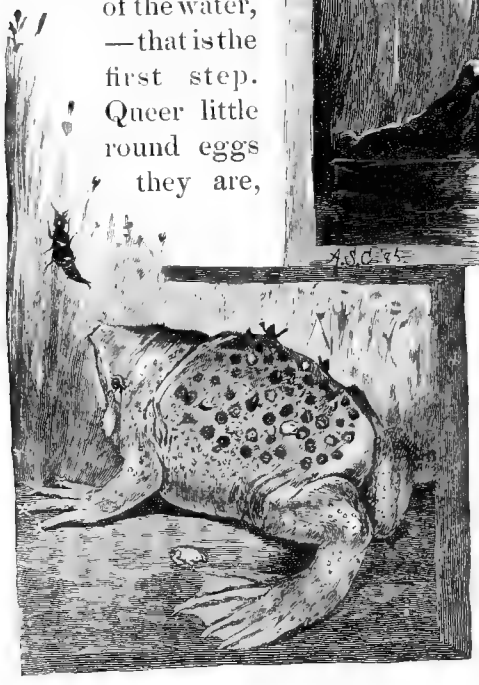
Now who is this stout lady? And what is this stout lady doing? And what is the matter with her back?

This is Mrs. Toad, of Surinam (her first name is Pipa), and she is taking her family out for a walk. I ought to say, for a hop, for Mrs. Toad does not walk, but hops, after the manner of all toads. In most of her manners, however, she flatters herself she does not in the least resemble other toads. In fact she regards all other toads as a set of low, grovelling creatures.

"People who neglect their children!" she says, with a shudder. "No words can express my contempt for them. Only fancy, my dears (she is talking to her children now), those common toads, and the frogs, too, who give themselves such airs, and call themselves opera-singers, — they all neglect their families in the most *shocking* manner. Why, they just lay their eggs at the bottom of a pond, or a river, or any water that happens to be convenient, and then — go off and leave them! Actually *leave* them, before they are hatched; father and mother both go off wherever they like,

and never even *see* their children. *Disgusting!* Don't you speak to any of those people if you meet them. They aren't fit for you to associate with!" And off hops Mrs. Surinam Toad, with her nose very high in the air.

Well, that is all very fine, certainly. But now let us see how Mrs. Toad herself takes care of her family. She considers herself a model mother, and so she is; but she could not do much without Mr. Toad's help. She lays her eggs by the margin of the water, —that is the first step. Queer little round eggs they are,



and there are a great many of them.

Now, what does Mr. Toad do? He takes the eggs up, and puts them into little round holes in his wife's broad back. Every cell receives its eggs, and then is shut down with a kind of lid, or flap, which fits quite closely. When the eggs are all put away Mr. Toad's task is done, and he goes off to amuse himself; and Mrs. Toad hops slowly about, or sits quietly blinking in a dark corner, waiting for the eggs to hatch.

In due time out of each little egg comes a tadpole with a round body and a wriggling tail. To tell the truth they look very much

like their vagrant cousins, the tadpoles, who are hatched in the water, and grow up anyhow and everyhow, without any care or attention from anybody. Indeed (though you need not tell Mrs. Toad I said so), if I were a tadpole I would much rather be a common one.

These little fellows lead the merriest life imaginable, wriggling about in the clear water, or the nice, soft mud, frolicking and chasing each other, and listening to the thrilling tales the big frogs tell each other in the evenings. Whereas Mrs. Surinam Toad's little fellows have to spend all their tadpolehood in their mamma's dark little pockets, with no freedom and no society; and they are not allowed to come out at all until their tails are gone and their legs are come; in fact, until they are no longer tadpoles but toads. Then they hop out, say good-by to their fond parent, and go off to see the world, and to lay eggs in their turn; and Mrs. Toad watches them as they go, and says, "Ah! Now *that* is what I call a fine family! Brought up in the most genteel seclusion, with no vulgar associates, and with every advantage that the most refined toad could aspire to. I certainly have done my duty by my children."

Well, I suppose you have, Mrs. Toad, I suppose you have! But, oh! *dear* — ME!! To think of having to be a toad all one's life, and never to have had any fun when one was a tadpole!

THE GOOSE AND THE GEESE.

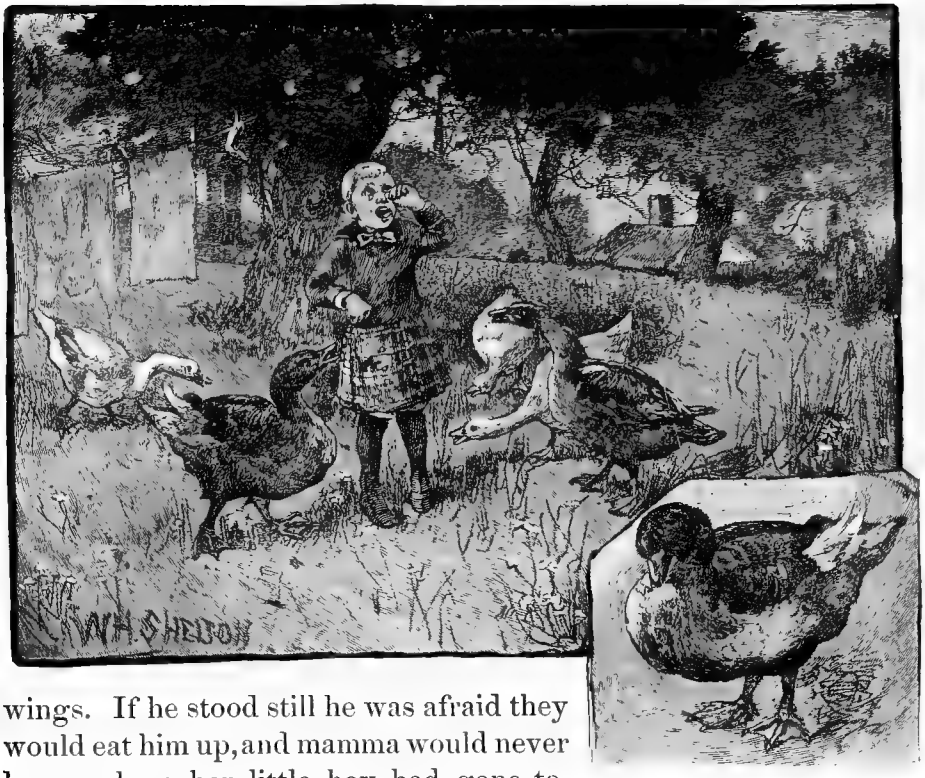
"GEORGIE, do you want to go to the orchard with me while I hang up the clothes?"

"Oh! yes, yes, Barbie," said Georgie, clapping his hands. He was always glad to go to the orchard with some one; but he was

afraid to go alone, for he was such a little fellow. He felt sure Barbie would take just as good care of him as mamma always did; but when the clothes were hung up Barbie went to the house without saying a word to Georgie.

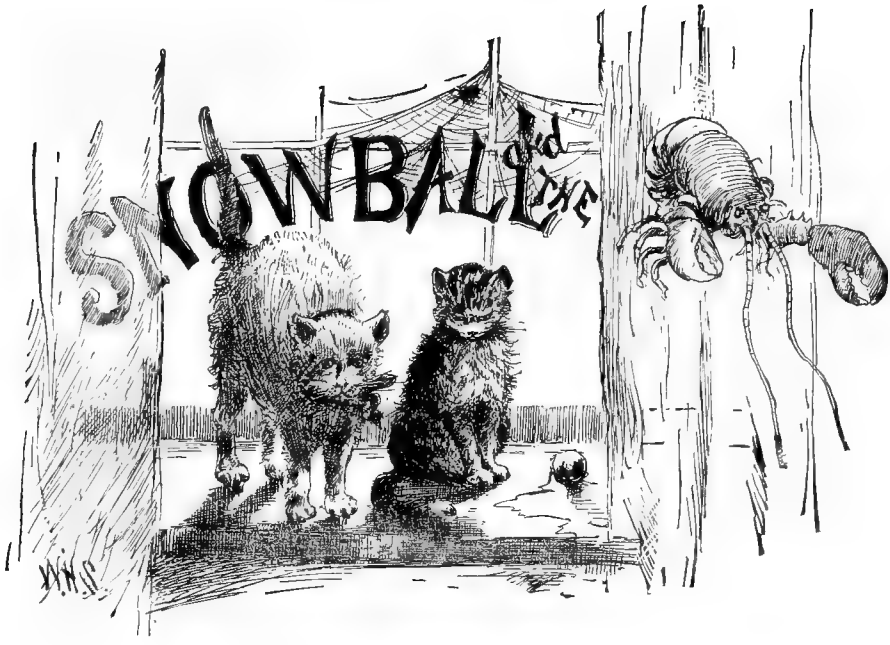
The little boy very soon found that he was alone, and set up a loud cry. This drew the attention of a flock of geese, who were nibbling grass near by, and they all came around him. No doubt they wondered what small thing it was that stood so still and made such a noise. It couldn't be a goose, though Georgie was not much bigger than a goose, and, you may think, acted much like one. Was it something good to eat?

They quacked to each other these questions, and then they began to nibble his fingers. Georgie's cries grew louder and his tears fell faster, and, oh, how far away the house seemed, and there were no windows looking out upon the orchard! He would run, but he was afraid the geese would knock him down with their



wings. If he stood still he was afraid they would eat him up, and mamma would never know where her little boy had gone to.

Oh, he must get home to mamma; and, giving one great, big, frightened yell, he started and ran, expecting the next moment to feel the strong white wings beating him to the ground; but, to his great surprise, the geese made no objections to his going, and he was soon showing his bleeding fingers to mamma and telling the story of his wonderful escape. Mamma listened, and kissed the little finger-tips and bound them up carefully. She rocked her little boy in her arms and sang to him. Meanwhile the geese in the orchard went on quietly nibbling the grass. They had forgotten all about him.



Tom had just brought in something in a covered basket; something which he put down on the kitchen floor for a moment, while he went into the pantry to see the cook, and taste the fresh, crisp doughnuts.

The two kittens had been enjoying a nap in the sunshine on the wide window-sill, and when Tom came into the kitchen the noise he made woke them.

Snowball lazily stretched himself and gave a great yawn. Then he mewed to Kitty that he would like his dinner. He began to hunt for some mice, and Kitty purred that she would go with him anywhere.

Snowball was a large white kitten, and wore a blue ribbon around his neck. Kitty was younger and smaller than Snowball, and always allowed him to take the lead in their adventures.

Kitty's coat was gray, and her four legs were pure white. Mary said she wore white stockings and white gloves.

As the two kittens were walking across the kitchen floor to the door Snowball saw Tom's basket, and went up to see what was in it. With his nose he pushed up the lid of the basket. He found

something alive under it. He turned around to call Kitty to come, and in doing so his tail fell across the now open basket.

There was a cross old lobster inside the basket. He did not like to have Snowball's tail in his face; the hairs on it tickled his nose. So he just caught hold of the tail with his pincers. He gave it a strong nip, and would not let it go.

Poor Snowball mewed piteously, and ran round and round the kitchen, the lobster and the basket spinning round behind him.

Seeing the trouble Snowball was in Kitty gave one frantic "mew," and ran out of the door. She perched in safety upon the fence.

The luckless Snowball pulled so hard that he drew the lobster out of the basket. He ran out into the yard and around the house, where he was seen by the dog. Watch ran after the flying lobster.

Tom heard Watch barking loudly, and went out to see what all the fuss was about. He rescued Snowball from the lobster, and the lobster from Snowball and Watch, and carried the shell-fish back into the house.

As soon as Snowball was free he ran under the house. He could not be coaxed out all the rest of the day. He lay there, sadly looking at his poor tail, and licking it from time to time. Since then he has not seemed at all curious about baskets and their contents.

THE BLACK SHEEP.

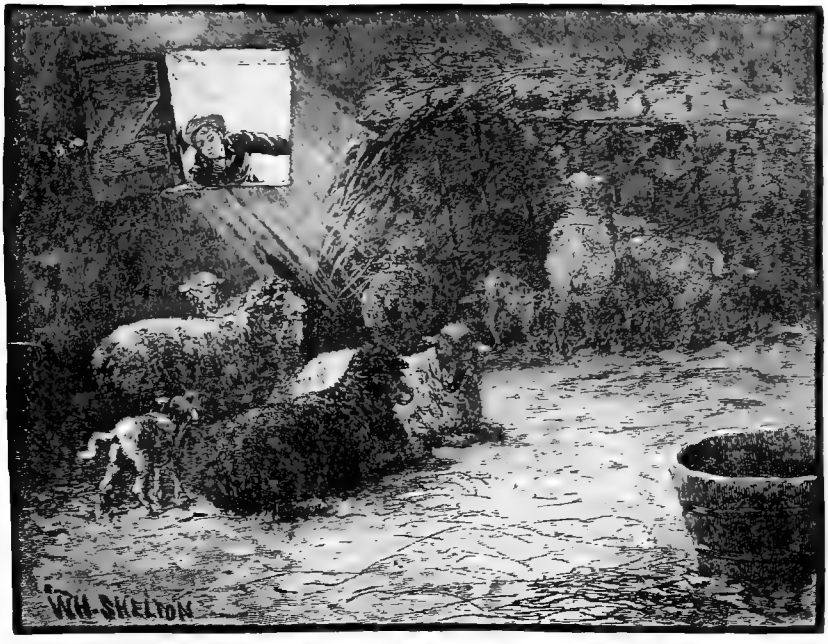
FARMER DALE had a flock of sixty sheep. Sammy Dale had a flock of six sheep. They were all his own, and when their wool was sheared off and sold to the mill-men he had the money. He had a cow, too, and sold her milk every day. He did not spend his money for candy and toys; he kept it and had it put into the bank. He saved all the dollars he could. He was planning to buy a mill when he was a man.

Sammy's Uncle George lived at Hill Farm. He owned a great many sheep, and among them were several black ones. There was one named Peggy, who was very tame and gentle. Sammy wanted her, and Uncle George agreed to take a white one in exchange for her. So one day Sammy took a sheep from his flock, named Hopover, and carried her to Hill Farm, and Uncle George gave him Peggy.

Sammy went home pleased with the bargain he had made. He took Peggy along to the pasture and put her with the other sheep. They were scattered about, feeding quietly; but when they saw their black cousin coming towards them they began to run away as fast as they could. They had never seen a black sheep before, and were as much frightened as if a fierce dog had come among them.

Peggy was not afraid of their white coats, and she wanted to be friendly, so she kept running after them, while they persisted in running away. Sometimes Old Lady Southdown, who was very courageous, would stop and face Peggy. She stamped her foot and shook her head at her, and then she would turn and run again.

At last Sammy called Peggy out of the pasture and put her into the barn. His father told him to wait till night, and let her go into



the yard with them, and then they would get acquainted with her. So when it was dark Sammy let Peggy into the yard with the flock. They could not see that she was black, therefore they were not at all disturbed.

In the moring Sammy looked into the yard and saw Peggy right in the midst of them, lying close to Lady Southdown. They knew now that she was a sheep, like themselves, though her wool was of another color. They were always friendly with her afterwards.

JOSEPHINE.

A TRUE STORY.

Our beautiful pet was called Josephine. She was a collie, with soft brown eyes, and had a great deal of sense. She seemed to understand whatever was said to her, and to have many thoughts of her own besides.

One day we were going to send off some of her pretty puppies on the train. Josephine went with us to the express office, and saw the little creatures in the box ready to set out. She came home with us, but we soon missed her. We found that she had gone back alone to take leave of her puppies.

Poor Josephine came to us one evening in great agony. She lay at our feet with her soft brown eyes raised, as if pleading for help. We did everything we could for our pet. A cruel man had given her poison.

For three days she suffered the greatest pain, and then died. We buried her as a friend, and covered her grave with green turf and flowers.

THE RABBIT AND THE PORCUPINE.

One fine morning the rabbit and the porcupine met together at the edge of the Looking-glass Pond. The pond was shining with all its might, and reflected the blue sky and the white, fleecy clouds, the butterflies that danced over it, and the purple flags that bent down to smile at it. But the rabbit and the porcupine saw nothing save their own reflection.

"It is pleasant to be beautiful," said the porcupine; "I am always sorry for ugly people."

"I agree with you," replied the rabbit, "though I am surprised to hear such language from your lips, for I cannot suppose that you set up any claims for beauty yourself."

The porcupine bristled up, and looked very angry.

"Oh, indeed!" he cried. "You cannot, eh? I am considered the finest specimen of my whole race, and my beauty is the theme of every tongue; but I can quite understand that *you* should have no idea of what good looks really are. You have not a sign of a quill on your body; and as for those hideous long things on your head — "

"Sir!" exclaimed the rabbit, "do you speak in this insulting way of my lovely ears, the pride of my heart, the envy of all the other rabbits I know? It only shows that you are as stupid as you are ugly."

"Yah!" said the porcupine.

"Bah!" said the rabbit; and they trotted off in opposite directions. The Looking-glass Pond sparkled, and a little ripple of a smile passed over it.

"Ah!" said the pond, "what hard work it is to reflect such ugly creatures; and how pleasant to be left alone again with the blue sky and the white clouds, the butterflies and the purple flags!"

PHILO'S FUNNY TEAM.

ARTHUR was four years old, and he had come up from the city, with his mamma, to spend a few weeks at a pleasant farm-house.

After supper, on this first night in the country, Arthur sat close to his mamma on the piazza steps. Pretty soon the sun went away, the air began to grow cool, and then mamma said, "It is time to go to bed."

Arthur scowled, and did not stir. He knew that it was his bed-time; but he felt that it was a great deal pleasanter to sit there, with so many people around, talking and laughing, than to go up-stairs to bed, in a strange room, even if mamma were within call. No, he made up his mind that he would not go just yet. So when

mamma held out her hand, and said, "Come, Arthur!" he scowled harder than before, and said, "I don't want to; it is too early!"

Just then Philo, a boy who lived at the farm-house, and who was more than three times as old as Arthur, came out of the door.

"See here," said he; "if you will go to bed, like a good boy, I will take you to ride to-morrow morning with my team."

"Oh, have you a pair of ponies?" asked Arthur, the scowl all gone.

"No, not ponies," said Philo, laughing.

"Are they big horses?" said Arthur, a little disappointed.

"They are not horses at all," answered Philo. "You will find out what they are to-morrow morning; it is such a team as you never rode after."

"Perhaps they are dogs," said Arthur.

Philo shook his head.

"Or reindeer, like those of Santa Claus," suggested mamma.

"No," said Philo.

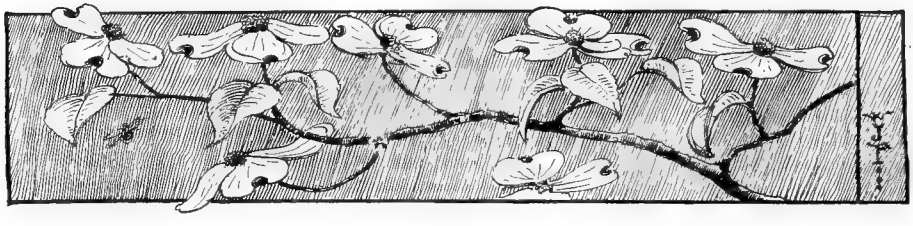
"Tell me," urged Arthur.

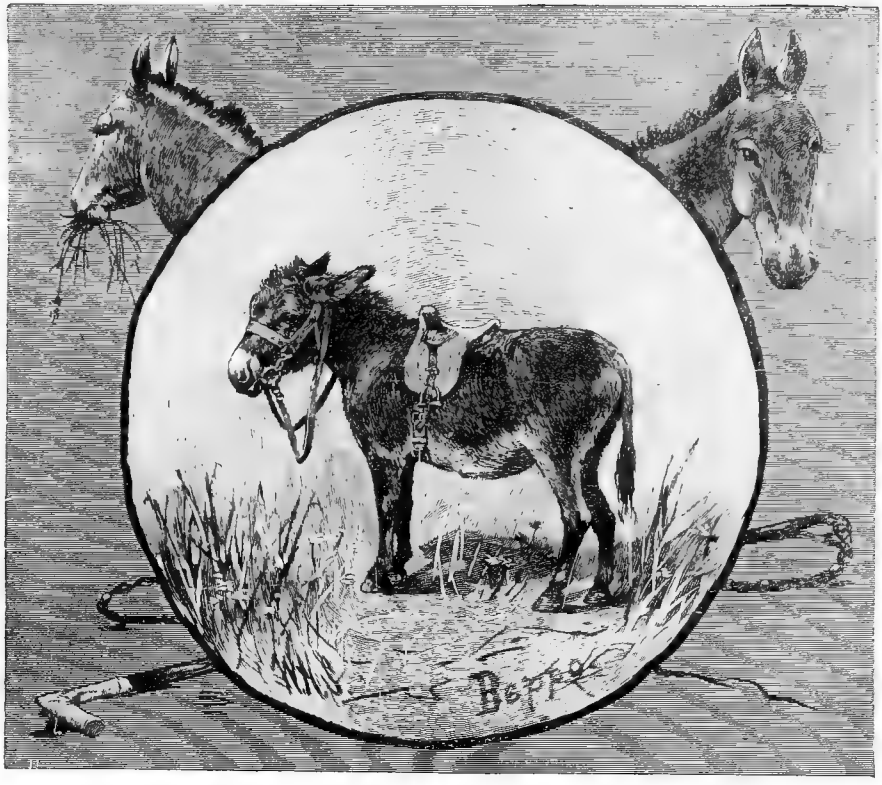
But Philo only laughed, saying, "You had better go to bed now, your mamma is waiting, and if you will get up early I will give you a ride before breakfast."

So Arthur went upstairs, wondering what kind of a team Philo's could be.

The next morning Arthur thought mamma was a long time buttoning his clothes; but it really took but a few minutes, and then he ran downstairs in search of Philo. He found him waiting at the door, and Arthur opened his eyes in wonder when he saw Philo's team. There were two pretty calves, yoked together, in front of a light, two-wheeled cart, and Philo was holding a whip instead of reins. When he saw Arthur he jumped out, and in a minute more the two boys were sitting in the funny little carriage, and the well-trained calves were trotting down the road at a quick pace.

Arthur thought he had never had so pleasant a ride before. When they reached home Philo made the calves go through some very odd tricks, in which he had trained them. Arthur had many other rides after the gentle creatures; and when he returned to the city he had a great deal to tell his little friends about Philo and his funny team.





BEPPO.

Beppo was a donkey, or a *burro*, as the Mexicans called him. He lived in Colorado. He was little, and furry, and mouse-colored, and had great, sad eyes, with long, dark lashes. When I first knew him he had no home, but wandered idly about the village. He was beaten and ridden by the school-boys, and lived on whatever he could find.

One day, when it was very cold, he came and stood by the fence, looking wistfully in. His big, sad eyes were sadder than ever, and his long ears hung meekly down beside his head.

"Are you hungry, old fellow?" I asked, as I opened the gate. He gave me a look of assent, and I soon had the pleasure of seeing him eat a hearty meal.

After that he came every day. He was very grateful for his food, and would rub his head against my hand as if to thank me. He soon grew very plump. Whenever I took a stroll he would walk

along beside me, and if he saw a boy he would come very close to me indeed.

One morning I heard some merry voices near my window. I looked out and saw Beppo walking slowly by, with four laughing, rosy-cheeked little girls on his back. Perhaps you will smile if I tell you they were not riding lady-fashion either.

"Where are you going, Susie, Ethel, Mabel, and Maud?" I cried.

"We are going a-riding," three of the little ones answered in chorus.

"A-widing," echoed little Maud, who sat upon the tail.

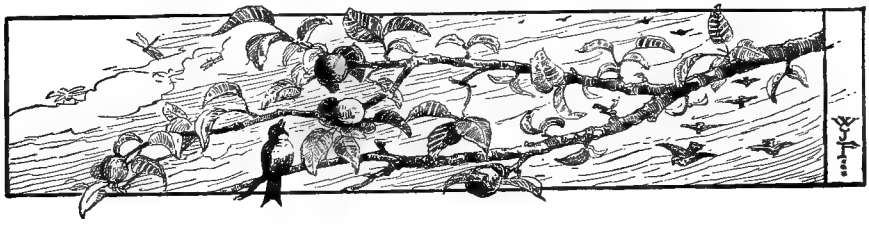
Alas! Beppo heard my voice, and not one step further would he go. I gave Susie a large yellow carrot; she held this on a stick in front of his nose, and then he moved on.

He always walked so like a snail that I feared he was infirm. But one day, when a pet mule was brought in from the ranch, I found I was mistaken.

Beppo at once made friends with this little colt. He was very playful, and I soon saw that Beppo could be quite as sprightly as the mule.

After that, whenever I took a ride on Beppo, I let the mule come, too. We had lively runs over the broad, sunlit plains.

When I left Colorado Beppo came to the depot to see me off. I am almost sure I saw tears in his big, sad eyes as I bade him good-by.



HOW LENA FED THE LAMB.

One morning before breakfast Lena ran into the nursery to tell mamma something dreadful. She said the dogs had broken into the sheepfold and killed ten sheep.

Lena lived on a sheep farm, and played all day with the lambs. Now the dogs had killed old Sukey and left her little lamb. Lena heard it bleating, and knew it was crying for its dead mamma. The lamb's teeth were too small to eat grass with, and Lena was afraid it would starve to death.

"Let me give it some milk out of baby's bottle," said Lena. Mamma let Lena carry the glass bottle, with the rubber top, out into the field where the little lamb lay bleating.

"Baa, Baa, Baa,
I want my ma!" —

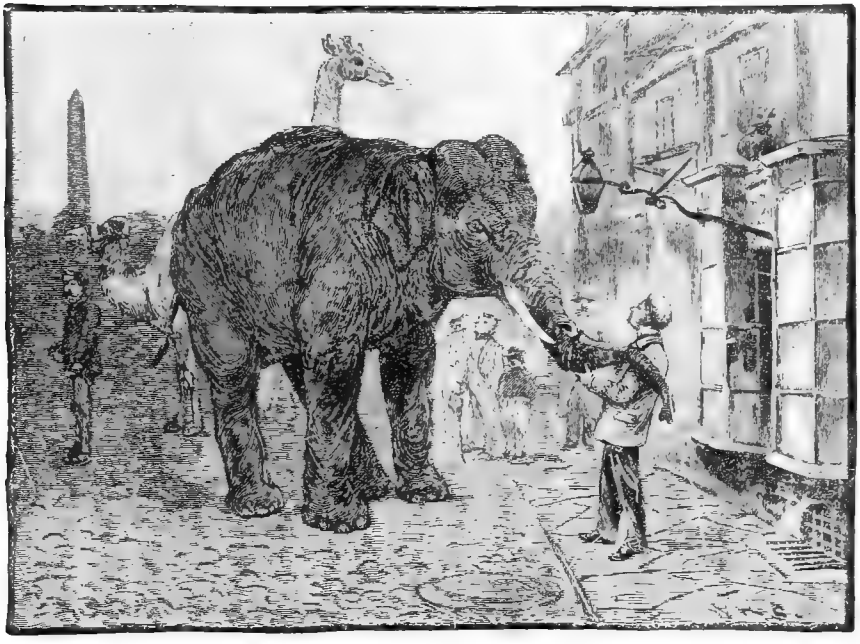
cried the little lamb.

Lena put the end of the rubber tube to the lamb's mouth, and it sucked the milk just as baby did. The lamb stopped crying, and forgot all about its mamma.

Many times a day Lena gave the lamb its bottle of milk. It grew big and strong, and always loved Lena very much for her kindness.

LIZZIE, THE ELEPHANT.

WOMBWELL'S collection of wild beasts was once the most famous in Europe. Among the animals was a beautiful female elephant, named Lizzie. While visiting a town in England Lizzie was taken



very ill with an attack of colic. A doctor in the place brought some medicine which saved Lizzie's life.

Some days afterwards the animals were marching through the street. Lizzie caught sight of the doctor standing in his shop, and stopped at the door. The doctor came out to see what was the matter, when Lizzie thrust her trunk gently towards his hand. The doctor took hold of the trunk and patted it in a friendly way, to Lizzie's great delight. After a little of this caressing Lizzie marched forward again with evident pleasure.

All animals are grateful for kindness, and none more so than elephants.

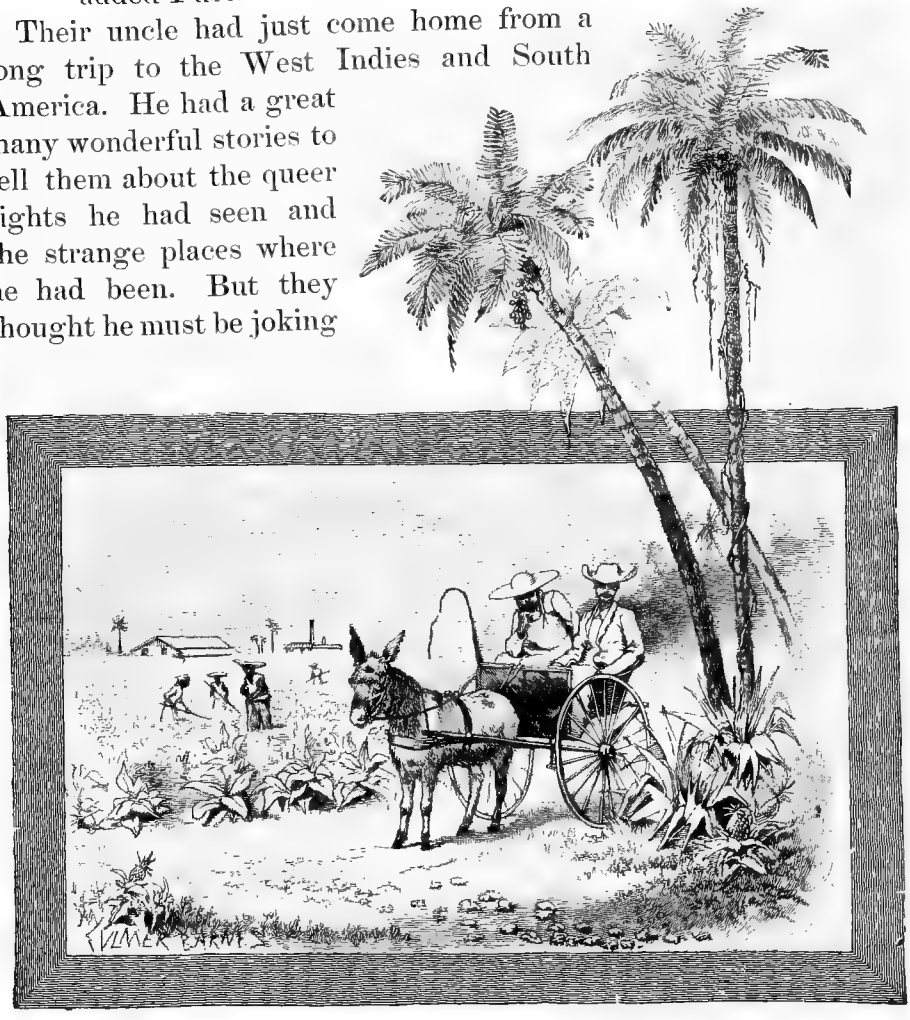
SOME QUEER ANTS.

"WHAT would you think to see an ant carrying a parasol?" asked Uncle Fred.

"O uncle!" cried Johnny and Puss at the same time.

"You know an ant could not carry a parasol," added Puss.

Their uncle had just come home from a long trip to the West Indies and South America. He had a great many wonderful stories to tell them about the queer sights he had seen and the strange places where he had been. But they thought he must be joking



with them now, for they could not believe that an ant could do such a thing.

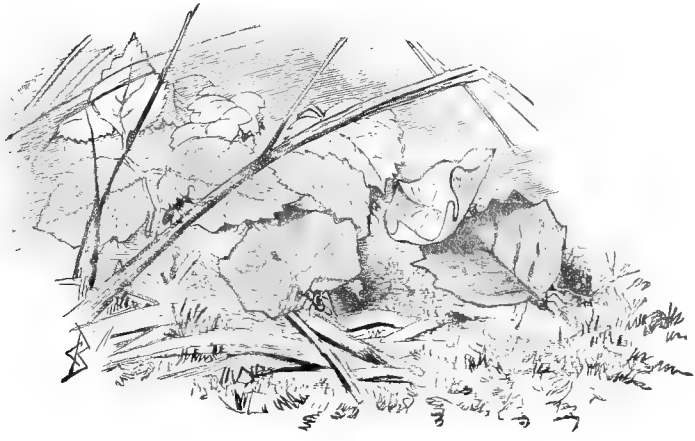
"Well," said Uncle Fred, "their parasols were not made of silk stretched over a wire frame. They were only pieces of leaves from trees, and the ants held them in their mouths in such a way that they covered their bodies entirely. You could not see the ants at all, so the leaves looked as if they were marching along of their own accord. The first time I saw any was in the West Indies. One day, when I was riding with a friend out to his plantation, a great swarm of these ants crossed our road. We watched them a long time. It was a very queer sight, I assure you. They did not travel very fast. There must have been thousands and thousands of them, for we could not see either end of the column."

"Where were they going, I wonder?" said Johnny.

"They were carrying the leaves to their nests. They do not eat the leaves, but they are very fond of a fungus which grows on them after they have been a little while in their underground nests. These ants are very destructive, and do a great deal of damage. Sometimes they will cut every leaf off a tree."

"Don't we have any here?" asked Puss, who was much interested, and wished she could see some.

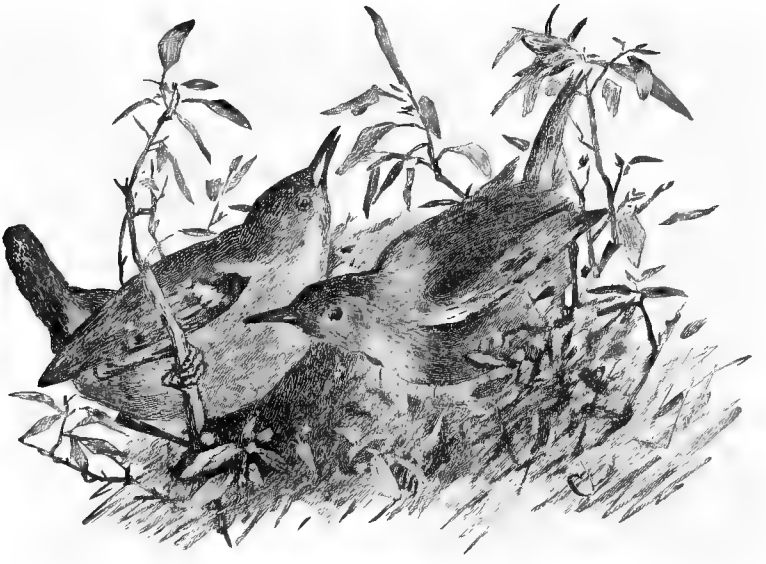
"No," said Uncle Fred. "We have some curious ants, but none like those I have been telling you about."



THE KING OF BIRDS.

Now, you think I am going to tell you about the eagle. Confess that you do! "Of course!" you say. "Everybody knows that the eagle is the king of birds. Do you think we are dunces?"

No, I don't think you are dunces, but perhaps there may still be a few things that you do not know, though, of course, it is only because you have not had time to learn them. And one of these

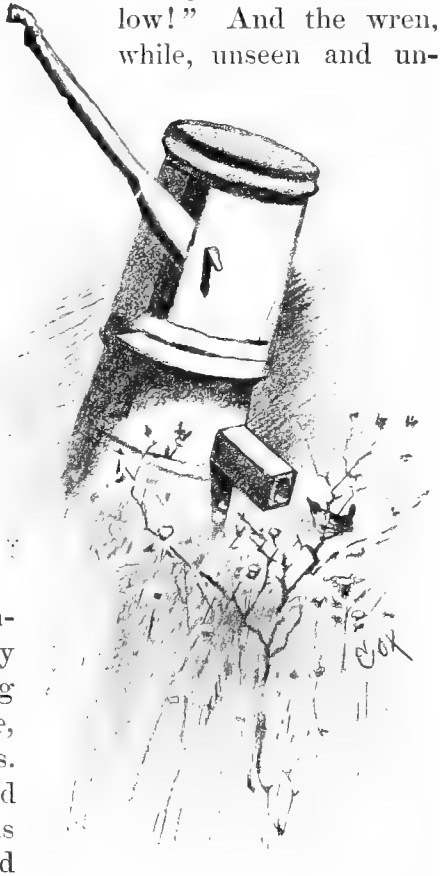


few things is, that, according to ancient story, the king of all birds is not the mighty eagle, but — the *wren!* — the tiny, chattering, brown wren, who builds his pretty, little, round nest in hedgerows and hayricks. I will tell you the story as it was told by a famous writer, many hundreds of years ago, and then you may believe it, or not, just as you like.

Once upon a time, then, all the birds met together to choose a king; and they decided that the one who could soar the highest should be ruler over all the feathered tribes. Up they all sprang into the air, hawk and heron, swallow and skylark, and every bird

that flies; up, up, up, till their wings were weary and their hearts faint. But far above all the rest flew the mighty eagle, his broad wings bearing him up like sails. When the other birds paused, exhausted, he alone soared onward and upward; till at length, resting on his outspread wings, at a dizzy height above the earth, he screamed in triumph: "O birds, behold your king!"

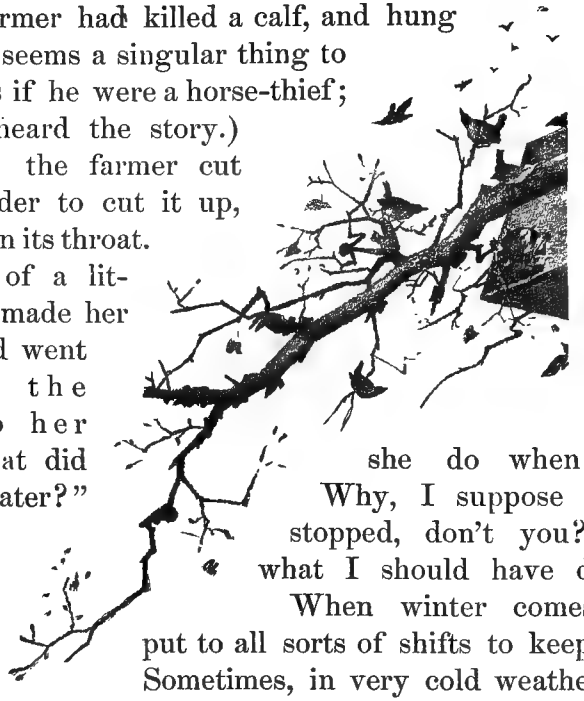
"Behold him, indeed!" cried a tiny voice at his ear. "But not in you, clumsy fellow!" And the wren, who had been perched all the while, unseen and unnoticed, on the eagle's shoulder, now boldly took flight, and twittered and chirped from a still greater height; while the weary eagle, unable to soar higher, beat his broad wings in anger and disappointment. So the wren was proclaimed the king of all birds, and remains so to this day; and it is a very pretty story, whether you believe it or not.



Now, let us look at this saucy little king, and see what he is like. He is about four inches long, of a rich reddish-brown color; and he has a saucy little cocked-up tail, and knowing black eyes, and a very sweet voice, which says very impudent things. He is always gay and cheery, and sings as merrily on a cold day as on a warm one; this is a good point in any king. He builds his own palace, and a very fine one it is for its size, being made very neatly of leaves, moss, and grass, and having always a dome, which covers it completely, the opening of the nest being always at the side. King Wren prefers this

domed nest to any other; first, because it is more lofty, and, second, because it protects the royal eggs from cold and rain.

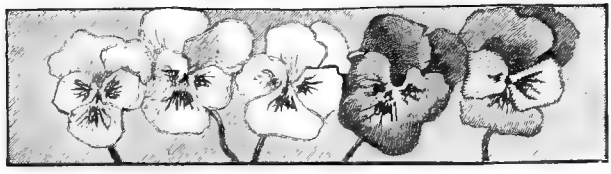
But sometimes he chooses the strangest places for his nest. A wren's nest has been found in the body of a dead hawk, which had been killed and nailed to the side of a barn, to frighten other hawks.



Once a farmer had killed a calf, and hung its body on a tree. (It seems a singular thing to hang a calf on a tree, as if he were a horse-thief; but that is the way I heard the story.) Some days after, when the farmer cut the calf down in order to cut it up, he found a wren's nest in its throat. Again, I have heard of a little Queen Wren, who made her nest inside a pump, and went in and out through the spout to attend to her natural duties. "What did she do when they were pumping water?" Why, I suppose she waited until they stopped, don't you? At least that is what I should have done in her case. When winter comes the little wrens are put to all sorts of shifts to keep themselves warm. Sometimes, in very cold weather, they may be found all huddled together in heaps, six or seven of them together, looking like masses of soft brown feathers. Sometimes they get into their summer nests, the whole family, parents and children, crowding into the little hollow under the dome.

Once a kind lady, who was very fond of birds, and used to scatter crumbs for them in her garden every day in cold weather, happened to see a party of wrens go to bed; and this is how they did it. They gathered together on a large branch of a tree, about four inches above which grew another branch. On the lower branch the wrens packed themselves comfortably together, three or four deep, the topmost bird always having his little brown back

pressed against the upper branch, as if to keep the whole pile steady. The lady pitied the poor, shivering little creatures, and the next day she nailed to the branch a square box, lined with flannel, with a very small round hole by way of door. When the wrens came to go to bed they examined the box, and soon seemed to understand all about it, for they crowded in eagerly, jostling each other in their hurry to get into the fine new bedroom. The next night there were more of them, and more and more, till at last more than forty wrens would crowd into the box, which did not seem big enough to hold more than half that number. Just think! Forty kings and queens, all in one palace! What a proud lady she must have been!



THE CANOE OF THE WATER-MOTH.

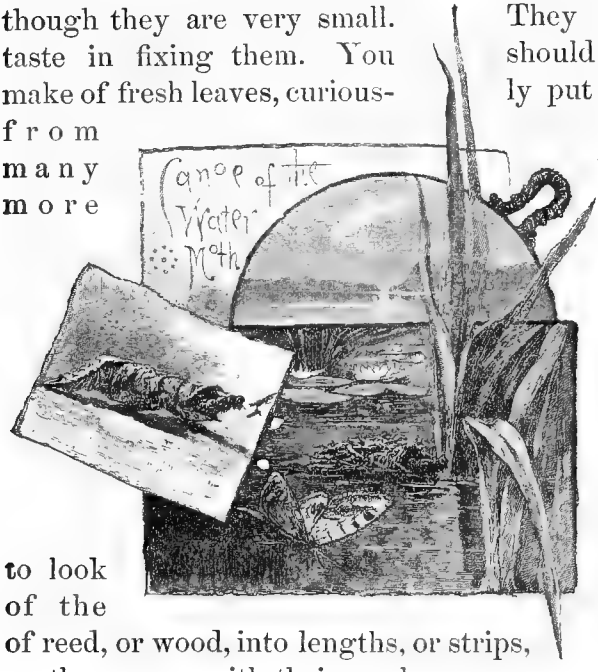
THE gnat builds his egg boat. The water-moth, another little creature, puts together a real canoe. It is a very curious thing, made of bits of straw and reeds all matted together. It is just the shape of the caterpillar that lives in it. The insect breathes with gills just like a fish, and yet cannot swim.

So he fastens this straw and grass together, winding them all around with his own silk. The body of the caterpillar is soft and delicate, you know, and might get hurt if it was left exposed. This is the reason why he covers it so carefully, all but his head.

This funny sort of canoe is open at both ends. It is so fixed that when the grub is tired of sailing he can sink down upon the sand. Reaching out of the upper end are his six little feet, with which he drags his small boat after him whenever he wants to get

his dinner or put up for the night. After several days he not only creeps out of this strange house, but out of his skin, at the same time taking on moth wings.

Many people call these queer creatures "laddis worms." If you hunt for them with your young eyes you can find these little nests of stone, and gravel, and leaves, made by the grubs, though they are very small. They seem to have great taste in fixing them. You should see the houses they make of fresh leaves, curiously put together. They hang from their shoulders like so many wings. They are even more like a bud just ready to open.



These pretty cases to look of leaves are glued together, leaving an opening at its top just large enough for the little creatures to put out their head and shoulders when they want about for food; others of the same species cut pieces of reed, or wood, into lengths, or strips, and join them together as they go on with their work.

They use a certain kind of cement, which is better able to stand water than any ever made by man. And they often finish up the whole by putting a broad piece, longer than all the rest, overhead, to shade the door-way, so that no one shall see them work. Some of these funny grubs break off bits of the stems of rushes, which, you know, grow in the water, and weave them into a sort of round ball. Then they hang them together on the stem of some other water-plant, making a little cell in the middle to live in. Some use tiny shells even, with snails and other animals alive in them. They keep these poor things just as if they were in prison, and drag them all about with them.

POLLY AND PRINCE.

POLLY goes on two legs, and lives in a cage. Prince goes on four legs, and lives all over the house. And the little parrot that can talk is very jealous of the black-and-tan terrier that can only

bark. Polly likes Prince well enough during the day; then they are on the best of terms. Polly will call, "Here, Prince! Here, Prince!" if the dog is out of sight, and whistle for him just like a boy.

Polly doesn't like to be alone. When her mistress goes out of the room the bird will listen, first with one ear and then with the other. As soon as she hears her voice she cries out, "Peek-a-boo!" and seems as happy as a child who has found its mother.

But the fun is when the master comes home at night. As soon as he sits down to his supper Prince is on hand, ready to receive all the attention. Sometimes he is on four legs, sometimes on two, and all the while keeping his ridiculous little tail going like mad.

At this performance Polly turns all sorts of colors, principally green. She begins to whimper and cry, "Take Polly! Polly's all alone! Poor Polly!" — until the master opens the cage-door and lets the queer bird perch on his shoulder.

Then there is a regular dog-and-parrot time, — Prince barking and jumping up at one side, and Polly shrieking at the other, "Out, Prince! Out, Prince! Get down, sir! Get down, sir!" Between the noises I wonder how the master manages to eat a mouthful. For I may as well tell you that neither Polly nor Prince is capable of learning good manners. I never heard of any parrot or black-and-tan terrier that was particularly well behaved. But there is one thing to be said in Polly's favor, — she never says any bad words. And that is more than can be said of some parrots, and of some boys and girls I know about.

TIBBY TAB'S NEST.

One day, late in the fall, Aunt Phœbe was getting ready to go to the city to pass the winter with her sister. Her pet cat, Tibby Tab, was to be sent to a cousin's, as usual. Tibby did not like that, for she was very fond of her mistress.

Aunt Phœbe's trunk was packed and locked. She had a large hand-valise, in which she carried some things, and when tea-time came she left the valise open and went downstairs.

The next morning the carriage came for her before she was quite ready, and so she had to tumble some of her things into the valise, and it was taken out with the trunk. Aunt Phœbe took her seat in the carriage and drove away, but before she had reached the great gate she heard Tibby Tab cry, "Mew! Mew-mew!"

Aunt Phœbe said to Timothy, "Tibby is in this carriage."

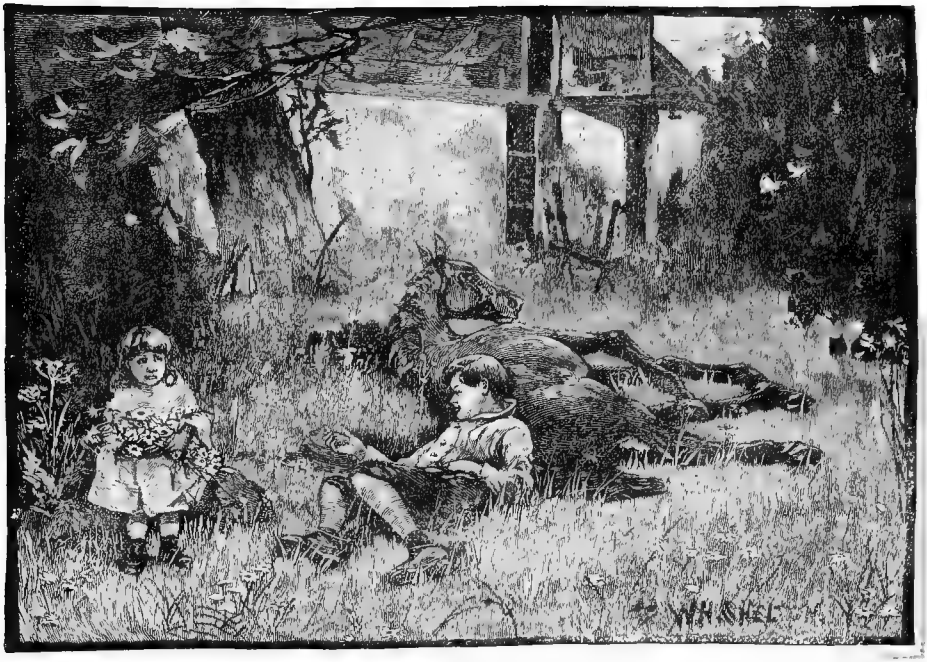
"No, ma'am," said Timothy; "she cannot be."

"But I hear her. Stop a moment."

"Mew-mew!" was heard again, but nothing could be seen of Tibby. Aunt Phœbe looked under the seat and turned over the

cushions. Then there was another "mew," and a scratching. Suddenly it came to Aunt Phœbe's mind to look into the valise. She opened it, and lo and behold, there was Tibby! She jumped out very quickly.

Aunt Phœbe was glad that she was not stifled, and drove round to her cousin's to leave Tibby; so the poor kitty did not go to town, after all, but had to stay in the country all winter. Wasn't that sad?



A VERY FUNNY COLT.

I WISH you could see our coltie. He is the nicest pet that ever was. He is so gentle that when he lies down on the grass to rest, little baby sister and I can lie beside him, with our heads on his soft side, as long as we like. Anna sucks her thumb; and I wish you could see her, lying on the grass, with her head on the colt's side, and her thumb in her mouth.

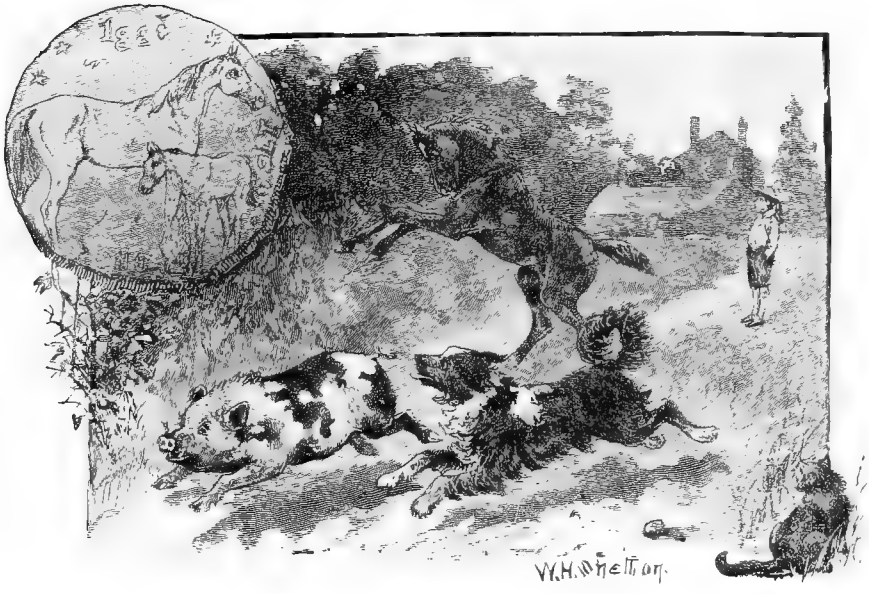
Sometimes Prince, the colt, and Fido, our big black dog, have a romp together. They run races, and play "Tag," and "Pussy wants a corner," I guess, just as we do.

If I go out in the yard, and do not play with Prince, he will put his head on my shoulder, or poke his funny nose into my face. He wants to say, "Why, Allen! are you going to forget me?" Then he will hunt for a lump of sugar in my hand or pocket. After that we have a race or a roll together.

One day a strange pig got into our yard, and papa sent Fido to chase him out. Prince thought he must go, too, and the poor pig was frightened almost to death. He wasn't used to being chased by a colt, you see.

The other night I coaxed Prince up to the piazza, to show some ladies how nice he was. He was in high spirits, and he began to try to kick at me, in a very comical way. He doesn't know how to kick like other colts, he is so gentle. He would work his heels, and make a funny noise, like colt-laughing, and say in colt-talk, "Now, Allen, I am going to k-i-i-ick!" His heels would come up just a little bit. Then he would whisk round and smile, as though saying, "Wasn't that clever?"

Then in a minute more he would put his heels together again, and say, "N-n-n-ow I'm going to k-i-i-ick!" And we would laugh till we cried, to see a colt kick that didn't know how. It was as funny as hearing a rooster learning to crow, or seeing a trick mule in a circus.



SLEEPY-HEADS.

ALL animals have their time for sleeping. We sleep at night; so do most of the insects and birds. But there are some little creatures that take such very long sleeps! When they are all

through their summer work they crawl into winter-quarters. There they stay until the cold weather is over. Large numbers of frogs, bats, flies, and spiders do this.

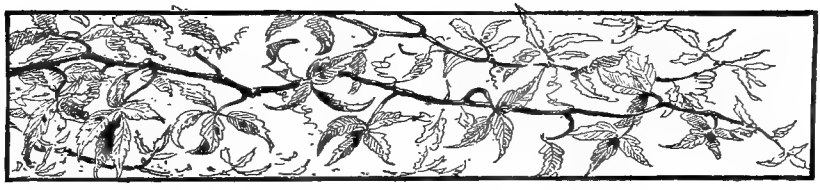
If they were only to sleep for the night the blood would keep moving in their veins, and they would breathe. But in this winter sleep they do not appear to breathe, or the blood to move. Yet they are alive, only in such a "dead sleep."

But wait until the spring-time. The warm sun will wake them all up again. They will come out one by one from their hiding-places.

I have told you that this sleep lasts all winter. But it often lasts much longer than that. Frogs have been known to sleep

several years. When they were brought into the warm air they came to life and hopped about as lively as ever.

I have read of a toad that was found in the middle of a tree fast asleep. No one knew how he came there. The tree had kept on growing until there were over sixty rings in the trunk. As a tree adds a ring every year, the poor creature had been there all that time! What do you think of that for a long sleep? And yet he woke up all right, and acted just like any other toad!



CUNNING MICE.

Up in the garret in our house there used to be a great many mice. But they never gave any trouble until one day, when papa put some corn there to dry, so that he could use it to plant in the spring. When he went to look at it, not long after, he found that much of it had been carried off by the mice.

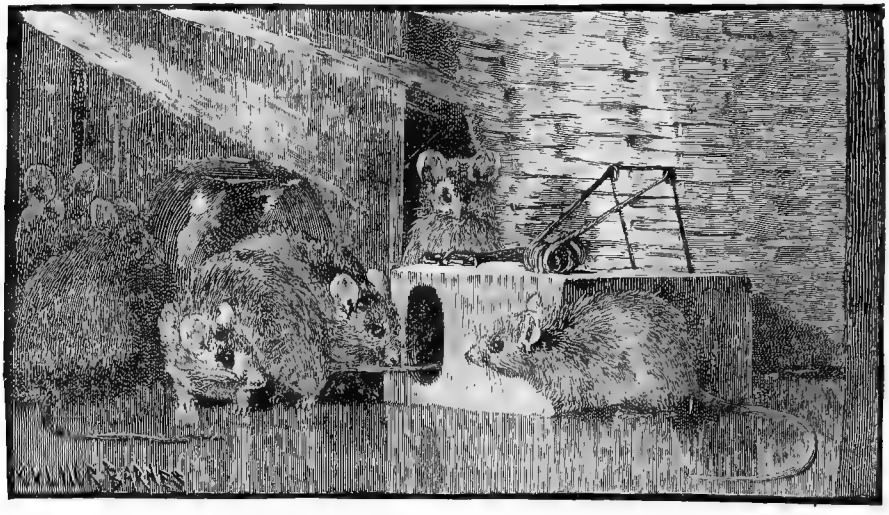
So he told me that he would give me a penny for every mouse I would catch. I was delighted, and immediately got our old trap, put some cheese in it, and placed it in the garret.

The trap had but two holes, and so could catch but two mice at a time. But I thought that a great many, when for three mornings I had found the trap full, and had been paid six cents for the mice. I thought how rich I should be if I found two mice in the trap on every morning for a year. But it did not happen so, unfortunately for me.

One morning, when I went to look at my trap, I found it sprung, and the cheese all gone, but there was no mouse. I set the trap

again, and the next morning it was the same way, — trap sprung, but no mice and no cheese. I told papa about it, and he was so much surprised that he said he would watch for the mice the next night and find out how they did it.

Well, he went up to the garret long after I had gone to sleep. First, he heard a little squeak, then in the bright moonlight he saw a little gray mouse, with large ears and bright eyes, looking



out from behind a barrel. Then the little fellow came out, looked around to see that there was no danger, and then gave another little squeak, when three or four more came out and all went to the trap, peeped into it, and saw that there was more supper for them. But none of them put their heads in to eat it. The largest mouse put his tail into a hole, and, striking the cheese, sprung the trap; then he pulled out his tail, got the cheese, and shared it with the others.

They all seemed quite happy in thinking how nicely they were cheating that little boy whom they saw so carefully setting the trap to catch them.

THE NEW NEST.

"Oh!" said Janet. "There is a stone in my shoe! Oh-*ee!* It hurts. I must take it off." So little girl Janet sat down on the door-step, and took off her shoe. Sure enough, there was a tiny sharp stone. She shook it out, and was rubbing her foot, when suddenly little boy Billy came running by.

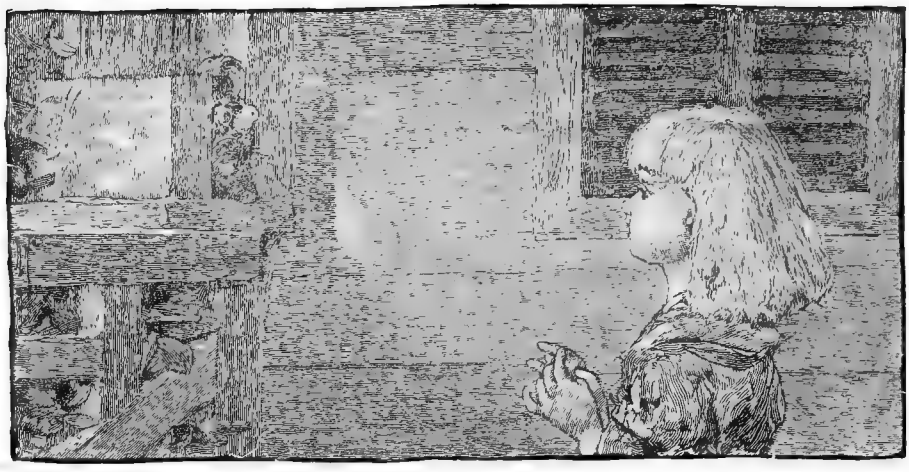
"Where are you going, Billy boy?" asked Janet.

"Down to the barn, Jenny girl," answered Billy, without stopping. "There is a new calf, George says, — a black calf. Come along."

"Oh! a *black calf!*" said Janet, springing up. "Wait for me, Billy! Here I am!" Just then she remembered her shoe, which she had dropped when she began rubbing her foot. "But I *can-*

not stop to put it on *now!*" she cried. So she caught up the shoe, and poked it in behind one of the columns of the veranda; then off she flew, one shoe off and one shoe on, and Billy boy and Jenny girl went racing down the green lane towards the barn.

The little black shoe stood up straight behind the column, and wondered what was to become of it. "I cannot walk alone," said



the shoe, "I am not accustomed to it. Must I stay here all day? I want to see the black calf, too. I was made out of a black kid myself, I believe; and I remember many boxes in the shoe-shop which were marked "Calf." It would be very interesting to me."

Just then a twittering and chirping was heard, and down flew two little brown birds. They were Mr. and Mrs. Wren, and they were looking for a place to build their nest. Mrs. Wren cocked her head on one side and looked up, down, and all around, with her bright eyes. Presently she spied the little black shoe. She flew up to it, and perched on it. She poked her head in. She looked at it on this side and then on that side, and at last she chirped to her husband:—

"Sweetest and best,
I have found a fine nest."

Mr. Wren flew up, and in his turn examined the shoe; then, nodding his head, he replied: —

"Bestest and sweet,
It is really complete."

Now there was no time to lose, for it was already afternoon, and the nest must be well under way before night; so the two wrens flew hither and thither, and brought this and that, and worked all day.

But where was Janet all this time? Oh, Janet had seen the calf, and then George had taken her and Billy off in the cart to the village, and they did not get home till tea-time.

"Why, Janet," said her mother, "where is your other shoe, child?"

Janet looked down in surprise, for she had actually forgotten about her shoe.

"I — I left it behind one of the columns of the veranda," she said. "I will go and get it."

She went, and there, lo and behold! were two tiny brown heads peeping out of the shoe. Mr. and Mrs. Wren were just going to sleep in their new nest. Janet stared and stared, and then she laughed, and ran in to tell her mother. And, "Mother," she said, "mayn't they keep the shoe, *please?* It is an old one, you know, and has a hole in the side; and they look *so* happy and comfortable, — the little things!"

Her mother went to look, and decided that it would be a shame to turn the pretty birds out, and that they might keep the shoe for their own.

"They might have consulted *me!*" said the shoe. "I am accustomed to exercise, and cannot do well without it. I shall crack, I know I shall. I wish I had stayed in the shoe-shop!"

DUKE AND THE CHICKENS.

I WILL tell you about something naughty that Duke, the large black and white dog, did, and how he was cured of it. He thought it was great fun to chase the chickens. When the chickens were very small he would run after them and catch one. Then he would carry it around in his mouth, and when he was tired of playing with it he would dig a hole in the ground and bury it.

Whenever anybody saw Duke catch a chicken he would run after the dog and scold him, and, if he could get close to him,

would switch him. But it was not easy to get very close to him, for when he saw any one coming he would scamper off.

Duke always took care not to drop the chicken. Sometimes he would hold the bird in his mouth so that it would not show, and sometimes just one little yellow foot would hang out.

One day, when Duke was running after the chickens, old Sport, — another dog that lived in the same house, — went after him, and caught him by the back of the neck and shook him. How Duke did cry! Every one about the place came to see what the matter was. Old Sport came up and wagged his tail, as much as to say, "Well, I've taken matters into my own hands, and we'll see if that foolish puppy will not let the chickens alone after this!"

Duke never tried to touch a chicken again. He would watch them, sometimes, but he never forgot his shaking, and did not offer to run after them.

JOSIE AND HIS PIGEON.

Did you ever see a ruff-necked pigeon? When Josie was six years old his Aunt Margaret brought him one, and Josie named him Billy. He had a ring of feathers round his neck, which looked like the collars we see in old pictures.

Aunt Margaret cut the ends off the long feathers on Billy's left wing, so that when he tried to fly he went round and round, but

could not get over the fence. By and by the feathers grew out long again, and then Billy flew up on Mr. Davidson's barn, and would not let the children catch him any more.

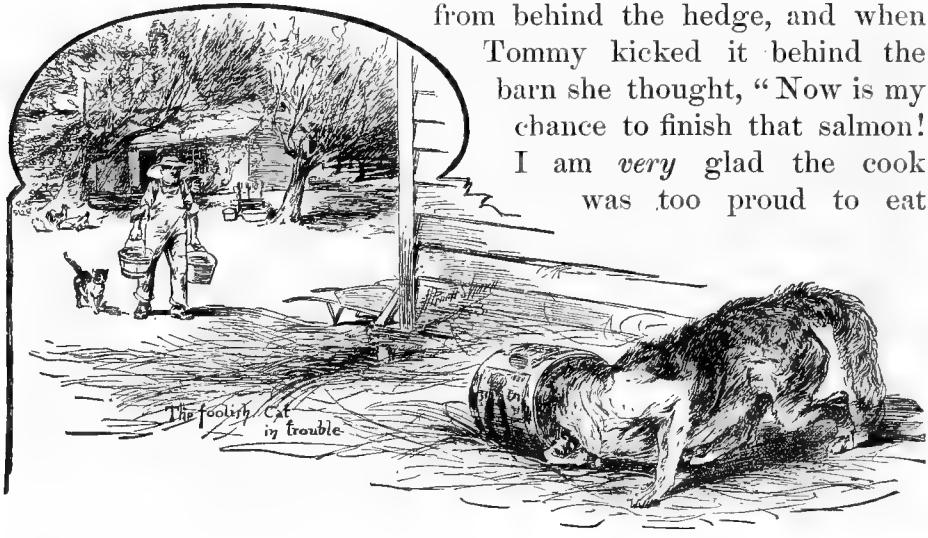
Mr. Davidson has chickens, and Billy flies down and helps them eat the crumbs and scraps that are thrown out to them every day. But he did something worse than this last summer. The chickens had a pan of fresh water every day to drink, but Billy would fly down and bathe in the pan. Was not he a bold fellow?

THE CAT AND THE CAN.

THE people in the house had had salmon for supper. It was not fresh salmon, but it was very good, for all that, even though it had travelled many hundred miles in a tin can. Mops, the cat, knew it was good; so when the people were at supper she found the can, and found, too, that it had not been quite emptied. In fact, the cook had left a little salmon in it on purpose, meaning to warm it for her own supper later. But Mops, the cat, did not care about the cook's supper; her own was of more importance. She put in her paw, and daintily picked out the best morsels. Salmon was certainly *much* better than salt cod. She was making an excellent supper, when in came the cook. Oh! how angry she

was when she saw Mops with the can. "You horrid cat!" she cried, snatching up the broom. "You greedy, thieving, sly — SCAT!" but Mops did not wait for the broom. Out of the window she leaped for her life; and the cook threw the broom, and the tongs, and finally the can itself, after her. "I wouldn't demean myself by eating after a *cat!*" said the cook.

So there the can lay, in the back yard, until Tommy came by, and kicked it about by way of a foot-ball, and finally left it out behind the barn. Now, Mops, though she dared not come near the house just then, kept an eye on the can from behind the hedge, and when Tommy kicked it behind the barn she thought, "Now is my chance to finish that salmon! I am *very* glad the cook was too proud to eat

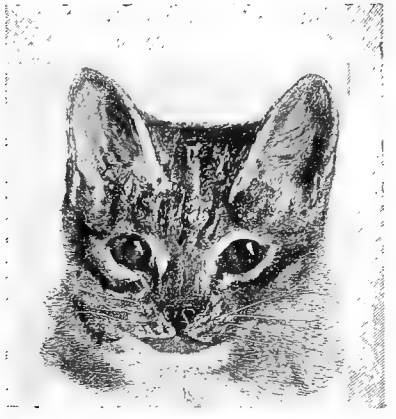


after me!" She crept along behind the hedge, and round through the orchard to the barn. There was the can, lying on its side. "Why shouldn't I put my head in, instead of my paw," said Mops, "and get it all at once?" Suiting the action to the word, she thrust her head inside the can. Ah, that was all very well! But when she had eaten the last scrap of fish, and tried to draw her head out again, it would not come out. She pulled and pulled; the sharp, jagged edges of tin only stuck into her neck, and held her tight. Half-mad with pain and fright, the cat sprang wildly about, striking the can against the ground, and making frantic efforts to escape; but all in vain.

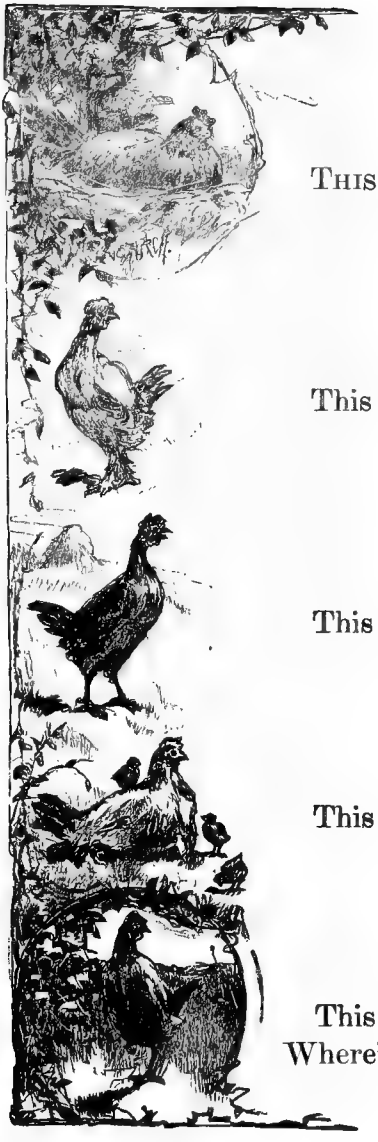
The sharp points had her by the throat, and would not loose their hold. She was shut up forever in this dreadful head-prison. At last poor Mops became so exhausted that she lay quietly on the ground, only hoping that death would come to release her from her misery. But she did not have to wait for death, — the poor pussy!

After a time she heard footsteps. She trembled. Was it the cook? But it was a man's voice that she heard, speaking in gruff, but kind, tones: "Well! well! who ever saw the like of that? Poor kitty! Poor puss! Cheer up, there! I'll take you out of that. How she got in is a mystery to me," said Farmer Johns, as he stooped down and carefully bent the edges of the can outward. Then, grasping Mops firmly by the neck, he gently drew her head out. Mops looked up. It seemed too good to be true. The light dazzled her eyes so that she could hardly see her kind preserver; but she rubbed against his legs, and purred, and squeaked with pleasure and gratitude. "There now!" said the kind farmer. "Who says cats have no sense?" — "I'll tell you, what, pussy," he continued, "you are always getting into trouble with cook, and it's no wonder. Suppose you live out here in the barn, and catch mice all day, and I'll give you a dish of new milk twice a day. What do you say, hey?"

"Mew! mew! mi-a-anow!" said Mops. "I will! I will! I will!" And she did.



A HEN–QUIRY.



THIS little hen is a-setting.

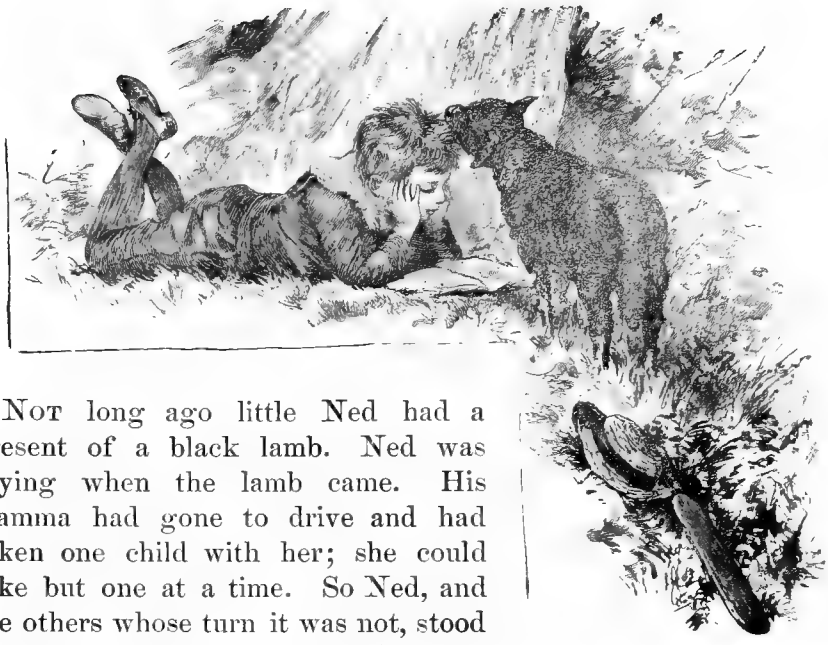
This little hen is not.

This little hen is a-fretting.

This one's content with her lot.

This little hen says, "Cut-cut-ce-*dah*-cut!
Where's the corn kept?"

NED'S BLACK LAMB.



Not long ago little Ned had a present of a black lamb. Ned was crying when the lamb came. His mamma had gone to drive and had taken one child with her; she could take but one at a time. So Ned, and the others whose turn it was not, stood on the stone terrace with tearful eyes, watching mamma out of sight.

Just then a man came into the yard with the lamb. Ned and the other children did not cry any more, you may be sure.

The black lamb was a very little thing; it had a line of white about its neck and feet, like a collar and cuffs.

The children called it "a beauty" and "a darling," and they jumped up and down around it for joy. Pretty soon the lamb did so, too, jumping up and down on its little legs, stiffly but joyfully. It grew very fond of Ned, and would follow him about all day. After a while Ned's mamma noticed that his hair was jagged and stubby.

"Why, Ned," she said, "what is the matter with your hair?"

"My lambie eats it, mamma," said Ned. "Lambie eats it, and he likes it so much; just as well as he does hay!"

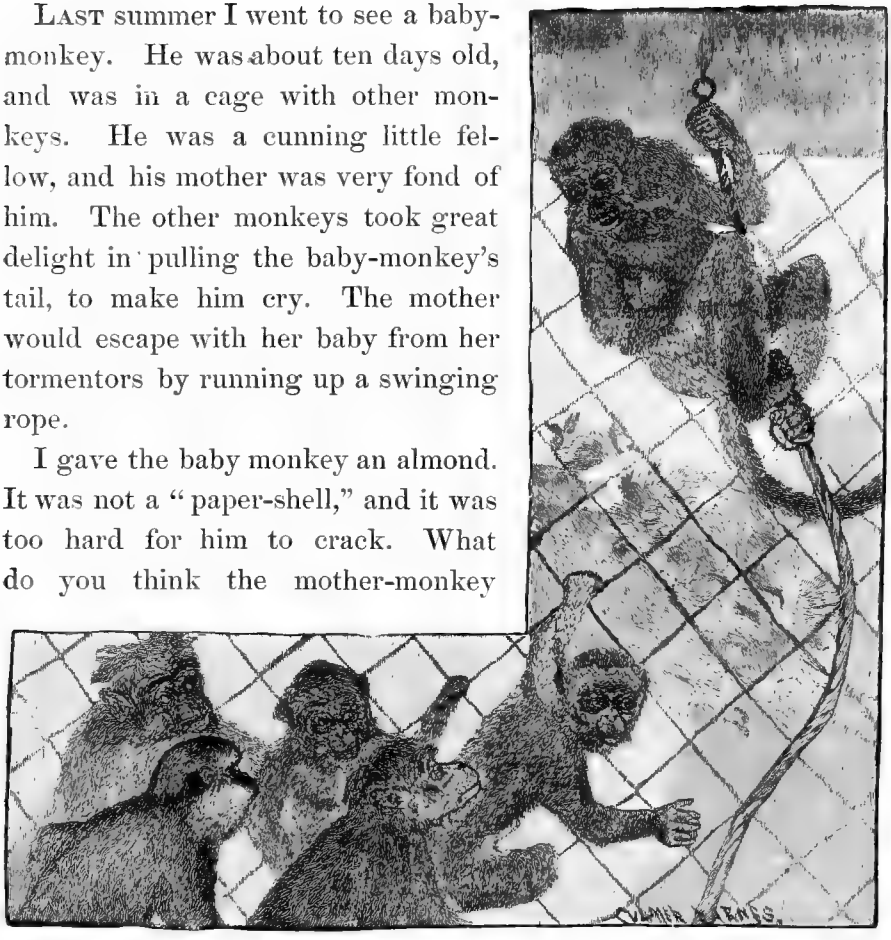
This was true: when the little boy sat with his book, or lay in the shade, the lamb would come up and lovingly nibble his hair. By and by lambie grew large, and he took a fancy to dance a stately minuet on the baby whenever it toddled out on the lawn.

So the mother had to send him off to the field, some miles from town. Poor Ned sadly missed his playmate, and his little heart was full of grief.

Some weeks after, when a flock of sheep went by, his mamma heard him say to the driver, "Please, have you a little black lamb with a white collar round its neck? I would like just a little one. If you have not any black, a white one will do 'most as well!"

Even now the family do not talk about the bad ways of that "black sheep," for fear of grieving Ned's faithful little heart.

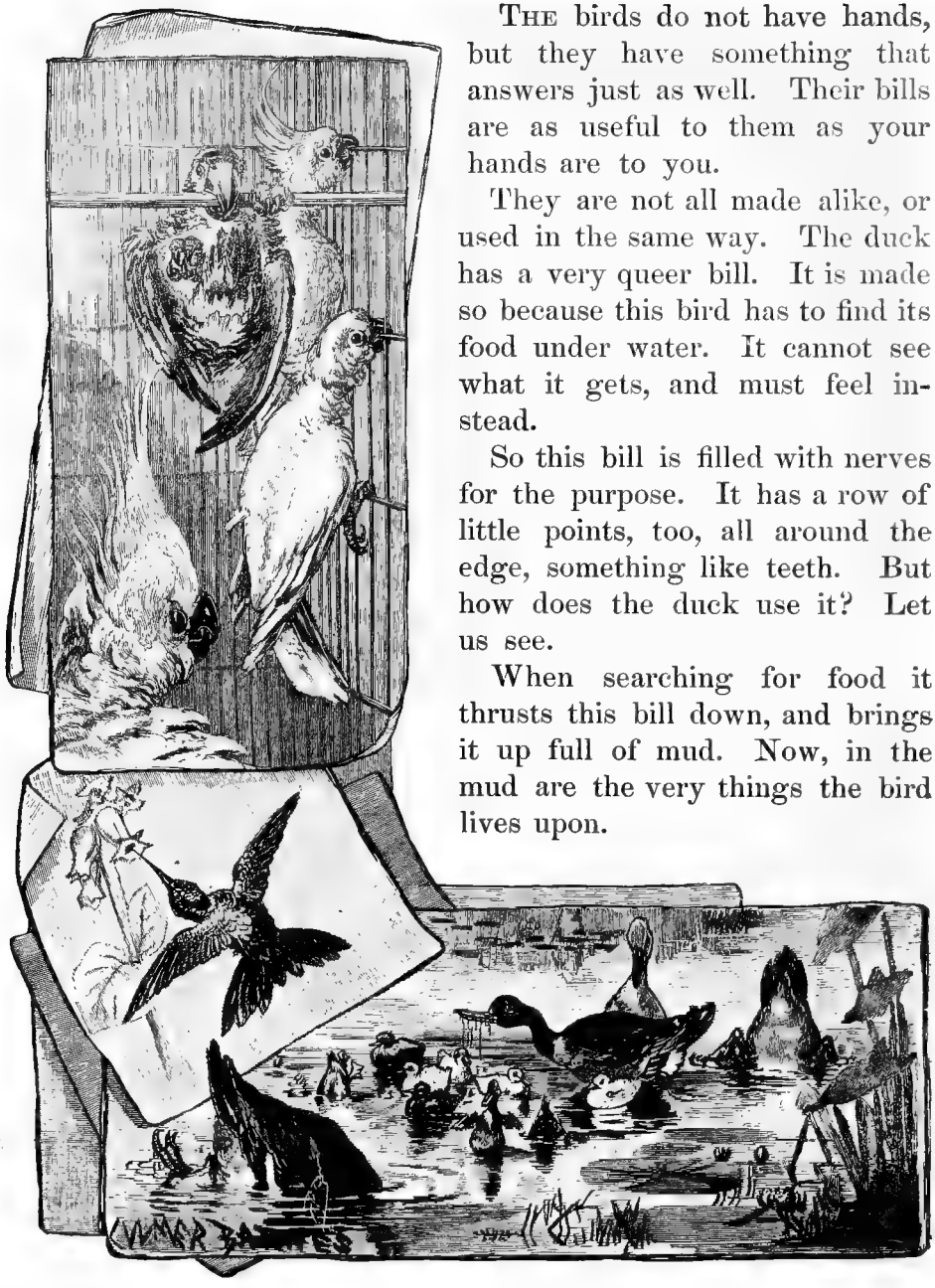
THE BABY MONKEY.



LAST summer I went to see a baby-monkey. He was about ten days old, and was in a cage with other monkeys. He was a cunning little fellow, and his mother was very fond of him. The other monkeys took great delight in pulling the baby-monkey's tail, to make him cry. The mother would escape with her baby from her tormentors by running up a swinging rope.

I gave the baby monkey an almond. It was not a "paper-shell," and it was too hard for him to crack. What do you think the mother-monkey did? She took the almond from her baby, cracked it, and threw away the shell. "Then gave the kernel to the baby," I hear you all say. She did not do anything of the kind. She ate it herself, much to my disappointment, but more so to baby's, no doubt.

HOW BIRDS USE THEIR BILLS.



THE birds do not have hands, but they have something that answers just as well. Their bills are as useful to them as your hands are to you.

They are not all made alike, or used in the same way. The duck has a very queer bill. It is made so because this bird has to find its food under water. It cannot see what it gets, and must feel instead.

So this bill is filled with nerves for the purpose. It has a row of little points, too, all around the edge, something like teeth. But how does the duck use it? Let us see.

When searching for food it thrusts this bill down, and brings it up full of mud. Now, in the mud are the very things the bird lives upon.

These little nerves tell it just what is good to eat. What is not good is sent out through these queer points, just as if it were a sifter. The nerves in this funny sieve take very good care that nothing shall be lost that is worth the eating.

You know all about the little birds that build nests with their bills, and what wonderful things they are. Some can sew very well with their beaks; of course they use their feet, too.

THE JEALOUS LITTLE DOG.

My name is Curly. I am a pretty, little cream-colored dog. I have a long, bushy tail which curls up over my back when I am happy, and drags in the dust when I am sad.

I am usually pretty happy, for I have a sweet, little golden-haired girl for my mistress. She loves me very dearly; at least, I suppose she does, from the way she squeezes me, and lets me lick her hands. Her name is Ivy, and she is so kind to me that I should never be cross or sad if it were not for Tom.

I just wish Tom were dead. If I were big enough I would tie him up in a bag and throw him into the river. Tom is a big white cat with sharp claws, and a tremendous appetite for beefsteak. He eats all the meat that Ivy gives him, and then growls and spits at me till I give him mine too. Half the time I am so hungry that I could eat Tom, hair and all, if he would only lie still and let me; but he won't. He is just the meanest cat I ever saw.

The worst of it all is, Ivy seems to love him nearly as well as she does me. She actually hugs him, and calls him her "Dear kitty;" and I can't stand it. I always growl at Tom, and try to squeeze

myself in between him and Ivy; but she says, "Ah, you naughty dog, you're jealous!"

Jealous! The idea of a handsome, dashing dog, like me, being

jealous of an ugly old cat! I declare, such injustice almost breaks my heart! I am going off to lie down under the currant-bush now, and try to die — if the fleas will only let me lie still long enough.

GOING TO THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

PAUL was going to a golden wedding. Grandpa and grandma had been married fifty years, and the children and grandchildren were to meet at the old home. What a good time Paul expected!

Would the day never come? At last it dawned. So impatient was Paul that his papa allowed him to start first. As he approached the station Paul saw a small dog pursued by a Newfoundland.

"Seize him! Shake him!" roared some idle boys.

"For shame! It is wicked to make dogs fight!"

"Hear the goodie boy! Hear mother's baby!"

Encouraged by the shouts of the boys the Newfoundland sprang upon the small dog.

"Oh, call him off! He'll kill him! Stop him!" cried Paul.

"Shake him! Shake him!" was their reply.

Paul's temper rose. "I'll part them myself!" he said. Springing into the street, he seized the Newfoundland and held him firmly until his frightened victim had time to slink away.

"Bravo!" called a policeman; and the muttering boys fled.

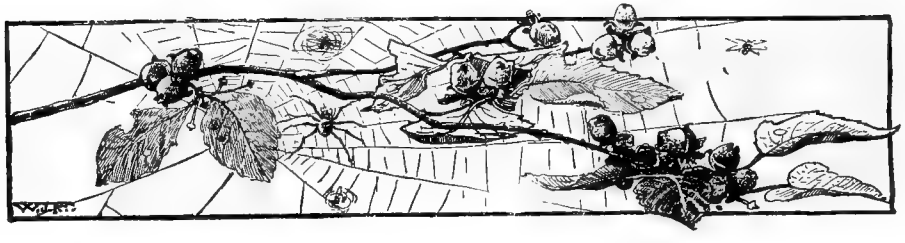
"Why, why, what is this?"—"Our Paul!"—cried papa and mamma. Here Paul's strength gave way; he let go the Newfoundland, and began to cry. But the officer told the story, and praised him so highly for his courageous act that Paul felt like a man.

Following papa and mamma to the cars, he was quickly forgetting his adventure, when a noise under his seat caused him to look down. What do you think was there? The Newfoundland! He looked at Paul pleadingly, as if to say, "Oh, be my master! Speak kindly to me; I've had blows and kicks all my life. I knew no better than to fight!"

"O papa, may I keep him?"

"If no one claims him. But you must never get angry and strike him; treat your dog as you like to be treated yourself, my boy."

Paul promised; and, could Rover speak, he would say that he had kept his word. Paul was quite a hero to grandma and his cousins, and grandpa was so pleased with his namesake that he bought Rover the handsomest collar he could find. And both Paul and Rover had great fun at the golden wedding.



THE TWO GOATS.

Toby had a brown and white goat, of which he was very fond. He had a little cart also, and used to drive out with his goat. Tommy was Toby's playmate, and lived not far away. He liked very much to ride after Toby's goat.

Tommy's birthday came in December, and what do you think his papa gave him for a present? Why, another little goat; only this

one was all white, and had black horns. It was called Snowball. Tommy was very happy, and thought he would go at once and make a call on Toby. There was snow upon the ground, and so Tommy harnessed Snowball to his little red sled. He set out in fine style. Oh, how proud he was of his handsome team!

As Tommy turned the corner he saw Toby coming in his goat-cart. Toby shouted with surprise when he saw Tommy's goat.

The boys hurried to meet each other. The path was wide, and Tommy tried to turn out, and make room for Toby. But Snowball would not turn. He wanted to have his own way. Tommy pulled first one rein and then the other. It was of no use. Snowball went straight ahead.

"You must turn out, Toby," shouted Tommy.

"I can't," answered Toby; "my goat will not mind me!"

In fact, both goats wanted to do as they pleased. They began to run, with their horns pointed out ahead.

"Whoa! whoa! whoa!" shouted the two boys. It was no use; the goats would not obey.

Bump they went against each other with all their might. Over went the sled. Over went the cart. Toby and Tommy tumbled headlong into the snow; but, after all, nobody was hurt.

It is a bad thing for either goats or boys always to have their own way.

THE WHITE EGG.

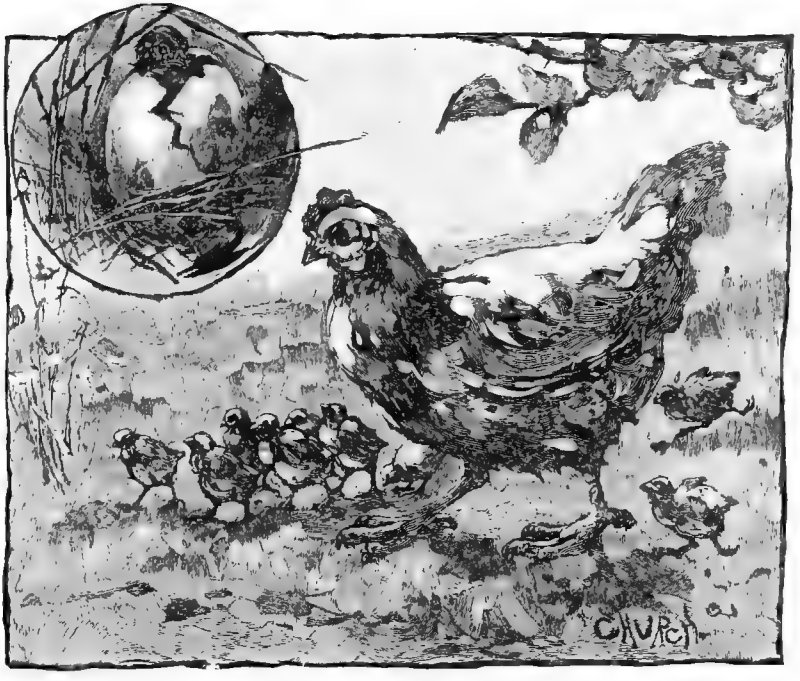
"WELL, well!" said Dame Partlet. "I really *cannot* wait for this chicken any longer. If he doesn't choose to come out he must stay in, that's all. You are all tired of waiting; aint you, my dears?"

"Peep! peep! Yes! we are very tired of waiting!" said all the little chickens.

There were nine of them, and some of them had been out of their shells for more than an hour; and their mother had promised to

take them over to the barn-yard as soon as they were all out. But one white egg still lay motionless in the nest; no picking or scratching was heard inside it; no crack appeared in the smooth shell. What could be the matter? Dame Partlet turned the egg over and over with her beak.

"I don't approve of helping chickens out, as a rule," she said.



"They are always lazy if one does, and don't work for themselves. But there must be something the matter with this one."

She gave a sharp peck at the egg, adding, "I *have* heard of a chicken being born with only one leg, but I have never had anything of that kind in my family."

She eyed the egg anxiously, and pecked vigorously at it, but her pecks, sharp though they were, made no crack or mark on the smooth white surface; and no answering peck came from within.

"I'll give him five minutes more," said the dame, "and if he isn't out by that time, we must go to the barn-yard without him. Perhaps," she added, in a louder tone, for the benefit of the naughty chicken who was giving her so much trouble, — "perhaps the old gander may come along and eat him up, shell and all. He'd *better* come out!"

And all the nine little chickens ran up to the egg, and, putting their beaks close to the shell, peeped, "You'd *better* come out!"

But the white egg lay still in the nest, and showed no sign of cracking; and when the five minutes were over, the old hen marched off with her nine chickens, and left it alone, at the mercy of the old gander. Now, I may as well tell you that the strange white egg was a china nest egg, so there was not much chance of its cracking at all; but of course Dame Partlet did not know that.

When she came back and found it still whole, and no sign of a chicken, she was very angry at first, but afterwards she became frightened.

"I fear the chicken must be dead!" she said. "Indeed, the shell is so hard that I cannot break it myself, and how can I expect a little chicken to do it? My dears," she continued sadly, "your poor little brother (*or* sister) must certainly be dead. Let us weep for him!"

So the nine little chickens took their nine little pocket handkerchiefs out of their nine little coat-tail pockets, and wept for their poor little brother (*or* sister) who lay dead inside the nest-egg. And the nest-egg lay there and took no notice of them, and would not even take the trouble to tell them that there was no chicken inside it. But it was made of china, and probably knew no better.

SOME FUNNY FELLOWS.

THERE is a bird that knows how to sew so well that it is called the tailor-bird. Look at this queer nest, which is hidden in the leaves all sewed together.

Perhaps you wonder where it gets its thread. Even that it makes from the fine cotton on the back of the cotton-plant, which it spins into a thread with its delicate bill and little feet. When it is all ready to sew, it makes holes through the leaves with its small bill, and then sews them nicely together.

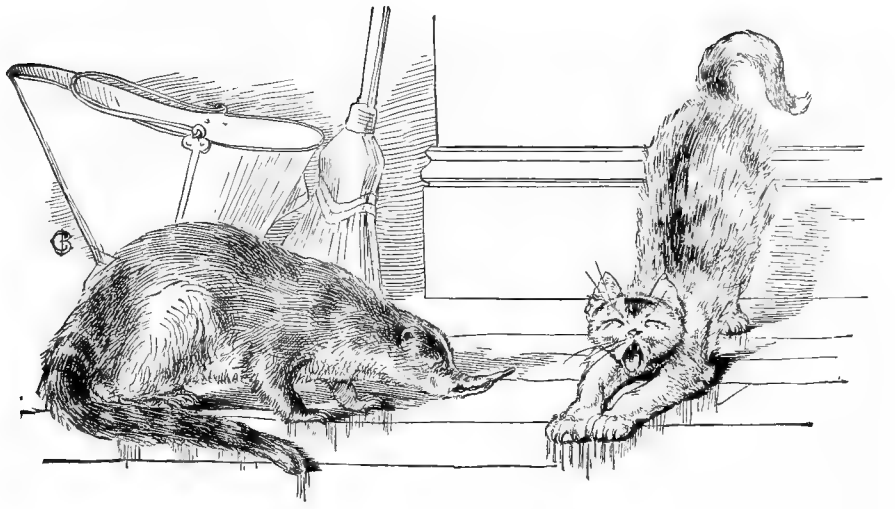
Some birds, like the woodpecker, use their bills to drill holes in the trees, to get at worms and insects, which they eat. You can hear the sound of this little instrument a good ways off. It is like many knocks, one after the other.

I will tell you of one other, and this is a strange-looking bird. It really has no wings, but such a long bill, which it uses, like all the others, for gathering its food,—insects and worms. But it has a stranger use than that, for it makes a cane of it. It puts the tip, which is pointed, on the ground, and rests upon it, just as an old

man does when he leans upon his staff. On account of this funny habit it is called the cane-bird.

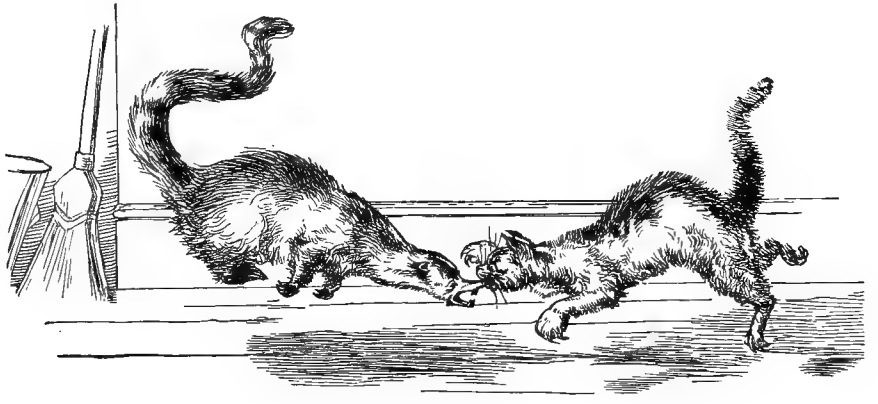
NAUGHTY NASNA.

NASNA was a coati-mundi, a cousin of the raccoon family. She was about the size of a cat, with thick, coarse fur, brown on the back and sides, and shading from yellow to orange underneath. She had a head and four legs, and a fat body; but the two most important parts of her, in her own opinion at least, were her nose and her tail. The tail was certainly very handsome, long, and bushy, with black and yellow rings round it. The nose was long, too, — long and sharp, and always poking, poking itself everywhere. There never was such an inquisitive nose. Now it was lifting the lid of a pot on the kitchen fire (for Nasna was tame, and a great pet of her master's), and scalding itself with the steam; now it was sniffing at a bottle of strong ammonia, without seeming to be troubled in the least by the smell; now it was in her master's pocket, trying to find out what it was that went "Tick! tick!"



But what do you think the nose did one day? oh! *what* do you think it did? You never could guess, and so I must tell you.

The old cat had been asleep beside the kitchen fire. She had had a long, long nap, — the sleepy old cat, — and when she woke up she felt that she needed a long, long stretch before she was quite herself again. Now, the way in which the old cat stretched herself was this: she put her four feet close together, and humped her back just as high as she could possibly hump it; then she stretched

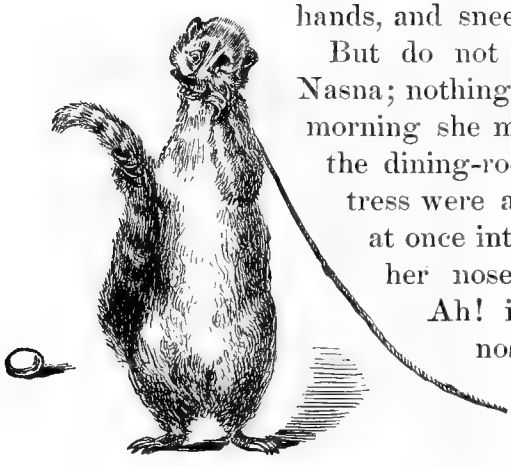


herself and opened her mouth to its fullest extent and said, "Mu-aw-yu-aouw!"

This was a singular performance. Nasna had never seen it before, and when she saw the red mouth open, wide, wider, widest, she immediately said to herself, "Dear me! how very odd! I

wonder what there is inside that red cavern? I'm going to look!" and the next moment the long, velvety nose was poked right into the old cat's mouth and almost down her throat.

Did the old cat shut her mouth? She did, indeed, my child; and who can blame her for doing so? But there was a sound of woe in the air, and a squealing as of a coati in despair, and the next moment Nasna was crouching in the farthest corner of the room, holding her wounded nose in both hands, and sneezing violently.

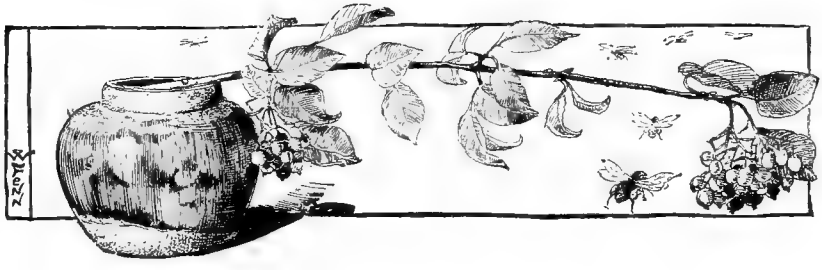


But do not think this was a lesson to Nasna; nothing of the kind! The very next morning she managed to find her way into the dining-room when the master and mistress were at breakfast. She climbed up at once into the mistress' lap and poked her nose at the shining coffee-pot. Ah! it was hot. Pop went the nose into the cup of coffee that was steaming beside the mistress' plate. Oh! that was hotter.

"I won't stay here any longer, to be treated so!" cried Nasna; and down she jumped to the floor.

Buzz! buzz! what is that by the window? Something small flying about, with a black and yellow jacket on. See, now it is crawling on the floor, and Nasna can catch it. Nasna does catch it, putting her soft paw on it. Mr. Wasp extends his sting, as the utmost he has to offer. Nasna squeaks wofully, but does not understand yet, so puts her nose down instead of her paw. This time there is no doubt about the matter, and she retires in great anguish to the kitchen.

One day as she was playing about, tettered by a string to a chair, her master took an egg and placed it on the floor, at a very provoking distance. Nasna could just touch it with one paw, but could not get hold of it. She tried with fore paws, she tried with hind paws; but all in vain: she only succeeded in rolling the egg a little further off. What was to be done? She sat down and looked at the egg long and thoughtfully. At last she put her head on one side and winked: she had an idea. She turned her back on the coveted treasure, and backed towards it as far as she could. Then she grasped her tail with one paw, stiffened it and curved the tip almost into a hook, and, touching the egg with this hook, slowly and cautiously rolled it round in front of her, till she could reach it with her fore paw. Then, in triumph and much pride, she sat on her haunches, cracked the egg, and sucked it, without spilling a drop. Clever Nasna! I think she deserved a good breakfast, don't you?



SLIPPERY SOLOMON.

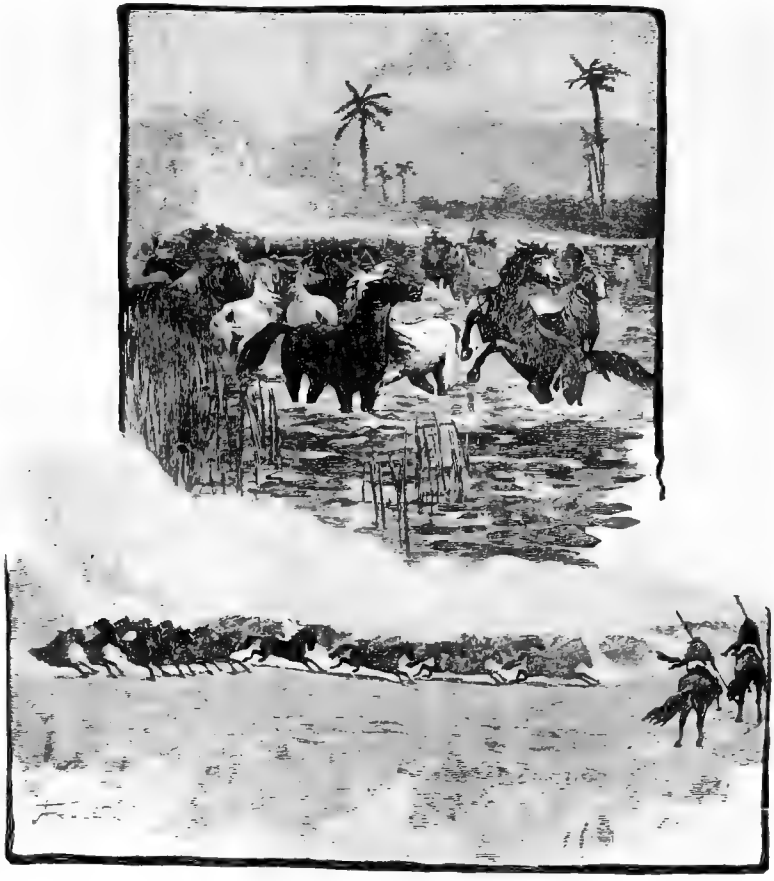
SLIPPERY Solomon was a gentleman who formerly lived in a certain aquarium in London. He is dead now; so there can be no objection to my telling you all I know about him. I call him a gentleman, because his manners and his appearance were polished in the extreme; but perhaps most people would have called him an eel. In point of fact he *was* an eel, though he preferred to be called a fish. Perhaps you do not know that eels are fish. I have met a great many grown people, and even some children, who did not. "Eat eels!" I have heard a man say. "When I want to eat fish I will eat fish; and when I want to eat snakes I will eat snakes; but I won't eat eels." But the eel is a fish, for all that, and very good to eat, as many people know. Thousands and thousands of eels are caught in the streams and rivers of New England, put in barrels, and sent to New York, where there are plenty of people ready to eat them. They are not pleasant things to cook, for even when you have cut one up into small pieces, the pieces jump, and squirm, and hop about in the frying-pan just as if they were still alive.

But about Slippery Solomon. He was a fine fellow, indeed, nearly five feet long, smooth and glossy, and very handsome in his way. Not a common eel was Solomon. Oh, dear, no! He was an electric eel, and he came from the river Amazon, in — oh, you know where the Amazon, is do you? I beg your pardon, I'm sure! He had more names than most people, for beside the two I have already mentioned, he was called Gymnotus by the

wise men, and Carapo by the South Americans. He didn't like the tank he lived in nearly as well as the river Amazon, though it was a good, big tank, and he had it all to himself. He could lie at full length in it, and he could wriggle, — oh! *how* he could wriggle! Positively, even a boy taking his medicine is nothing compared with Slippery Solomon when he wanted his dinner. By the way, I must tell you how he took it.

His servant brought it to him every day at one o'clock precisely. If he was late Solomon invariably bit him, which served him quite right. The dinner consisted of a number of live fish, which were thrown, one by one, into the tank. Now, how did Solomon behave

when he saw a fish? Did he rush at it and gobble it up greedily, without any consideration for its feelings? Not he! He was far too genteel and well-bred for that. He glided softly up to the fish, and merely *touched* it, curving his long black body slightly at the same



time. Just a touch; but that was enough; the fish turned over instantly on its back, struck as if dead, without life or motion. *Then* Solomon ate it in a refined and gentlemanly manner, and looked up for another. Now, how did he do this, you ask? Well, you see, that is why he is called an *electric* eel. Stored up in his body, in a mysterious way, is a great quantity of that strange

power which makes the thunder-storms, and which works the telegraph and the telephone. Do you know what an electric shock is like? Ask your papa to give you one; or stroke the cat on a cold day, and you will get one without asking. Well, when Solomon Gymnotus touched the fish he gave it such a shock that it never knew anything again, and had not the slightest idea that it was being eaten. Convenient, isn't it?

The wonderful power of the electric eel is shown by the way in which the natives catch them in South America. First they catch a herd of wild horses (*that* is easy, of course! I have often caught one myself; haven't you?), and drive them down to a stream, or river, where they know the eels live. They drive the horses into the water, where they plunge about, snorting and kicking. This makes the eels very angry, and they all come up and turn their electric batteries on the horses, gliding under their bellies, and giving them shock after shock, till the poor beasts are mad with pain and terror. They try to get away from their terrible enemies, but the cruel men (who seem to value an eel much more than a horse) drive them back into the water again and again, till often some of them are drowned. After a time the electric power of the eels becomes exhausted by giving out repeated shocks; they lose their strength, and are then easily killed by the natives, who let the poor horses go, and rush boldly in themselves, when all the danger is over. I call that the most cowardly trick I ever heard of. What do *you* think?

SAVED FROM FREEZING TO DEATH.

When Bobby Smart was six years old he was left to the care of his Uncle James, who lived in the country. His aunt took him to his future home, and at the station he saw his uncle for the first time.

Bobby was lonely and sad; his uncle often treated him with harshness, and even cruelty. The cold winter had come on early.

Bobby was the only boy about the farm, and he had to work very hard. His clothing was unfit for the winter weather, and he often suffered from the cold.

Among the duties which this poor boy had to perform was that of tending a flock of sheep. One afternoon, when there were signs of a snow-storm, he was sent to drive the flock to the barn. He started for the field, but his clothes were so thin that he was benumbed by the intense cold. He sat down on a large rock to rest himself. He felt strangely tired and cold. In a little while he

began to feel drowsy. Then he thought it was so nice and comfortable that he would stay there awhile. In a very few moments he was asleep, and perhaps dreaming.

Suddenly he was aroused by a tremendous blow, which sent him spinning from his perch on the rock to the ground. Looking about him, he saw an old ram near by. The creature looked as though he had been doing mischief, and Bobby was no longer at a loss to know where the blow came from; but he thought the attack was an accident, and in a short time he was again in the land of Nod.

Again the ram very rudely tumbled him over into the snow. He was now wide awake, and provoked at the attack of the beast. He began to search for a stick to chastise his enemy. The ram understood his intention, for he turned upon Bobby as if to finish the poor boy. Bobby was forced to take to his heels, and ran towards home.

The ram chased him, while the rest of the flock followed after their leader. The inmates of the farm-house were surprised to see Bobby rushing towards the house as fast as his little legs could carry him. His hair was streaming in the wind, and he was very

much terrified. Close upon him was the old ram, kicking up his heels in his anger. Behind him could be seen a straggling line of sheep, doing their best to keep up.

Bobby won the race, however. His uncle came out in time to turn the flock into the barn. It was a long time before Bobby would venture near the ram again.

Bobby knows now that but for the efforts of that old ram in knocking him from his seat, on that bitterly cold day, he would have been among the angels in a very short time. The sleepy feeling which overcame him would have ended in death.

Bobby declares that the ram knew all the time what ailed him, and that he butted him from the rock on purpose. I cannot explain it, but do know that "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

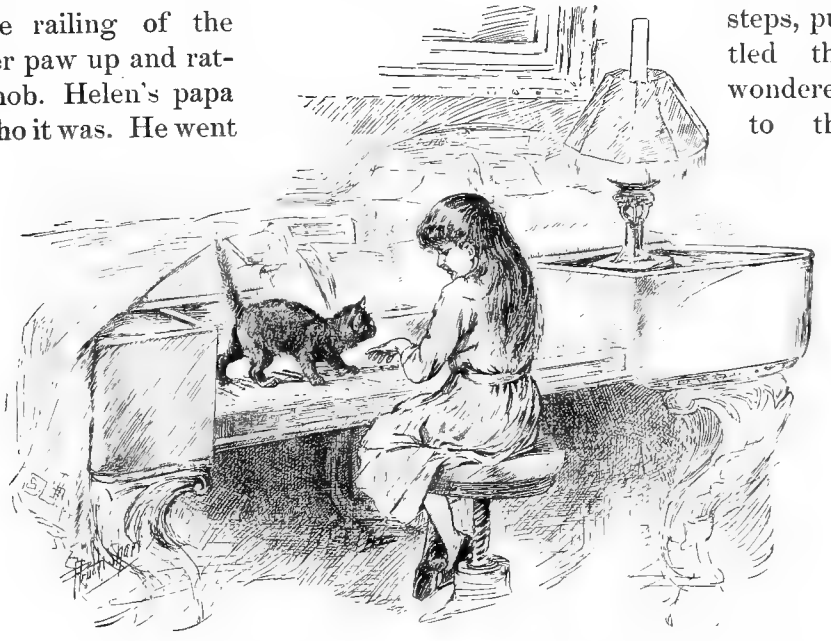
HELEN'S DAISY.

HELEN STUART was a little girl about eight years old. She lived in the city, in an old-fashioned frame house, with a large yard. One cold day a little kitten, as black as coal, came to Helen's home. She crawled down a rat-hole under the barn to keep warm. Helen called her out and brought her in the house. She gave her some milk, which she seemed to think was very nice. The kitten was so pretty that Helen thought she would keep her. So she named her "Daisy." Was not that a funny name for a black kitten?

One morning Helen went to the barn to call Daisy, and found in the hay, not only Daisy, but three little kittens, — one black, one white, and the other gray. She named them for flowers, — the black one, Buttercup; the white, Snowdrop; and the gray, Violet. They grew up to be very pretty kittens, and very playful. Sometimes they wanted to play with their mother when she was sleepy. She would keep telling them not to trouble her; but they would not mind, and would pull her ears, until finally she would get up and box first one on the ear, and then another. But she did not have to punish them very often, for they were generally good.

Helen now thought they were old enough to drink milk out of a saucer; but they did not like it. So she filled a spoon with milk; then they lapped it up very nicely. After a while they learned to drink out of a saucer, and sometimes Daisy and her three little kittens would all drink out of the dish together. Helen gave her kittens to three of her girl friends, but she still had Daisy left.

One night Daisy wanted to get into the house. She went to the front door and stood on the railing of the steps, put her paw up and rattled the knob. Helen's papa wondered who it was. He went to the



door. When he found it was only Daisy he had a great laugh.

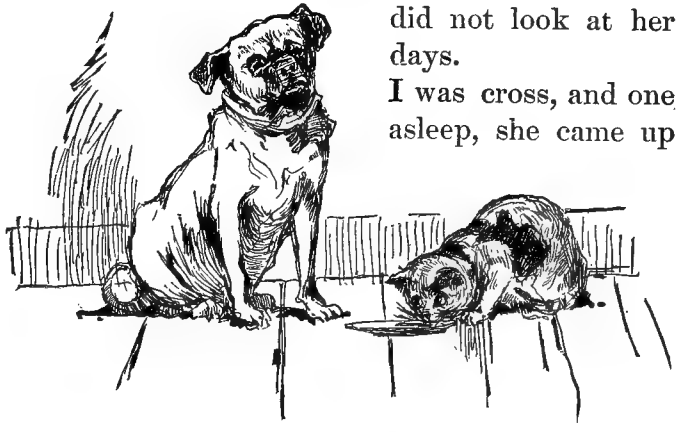
Daisy did not like music, and if Helen began to practise she would jump on the piano and walk on the keys. Daisy is now ten years old, and she has become very dignified. Helen is eighteen, and is very handsome. She and Daisy think they are too old to run races and frolic together. So Daisy lies down by the stove and dreams of the time when she was young, and Helen reads and studies and helps her mother.

SCAMP AND PSYCHE.[1]

My master's brother Alexis has a kitten. She is a very young kitten, and does not know how to behave herself. Now, when I was a pug-puppy I was quite bad. But I have learned how to behave myself.

When Alexis first got this kitten she was very ill-mannered, and often scratched me. He calls her Psyche. She is white and black. The first thing she did was to put up her back and fly at me. I knew at once that this was wrong, so I thought I would teach her better.

I went up to her to speak to her, and what do you think she did? Why, she flew at me and scratched me on the nose. I did not look at her for the next two days.

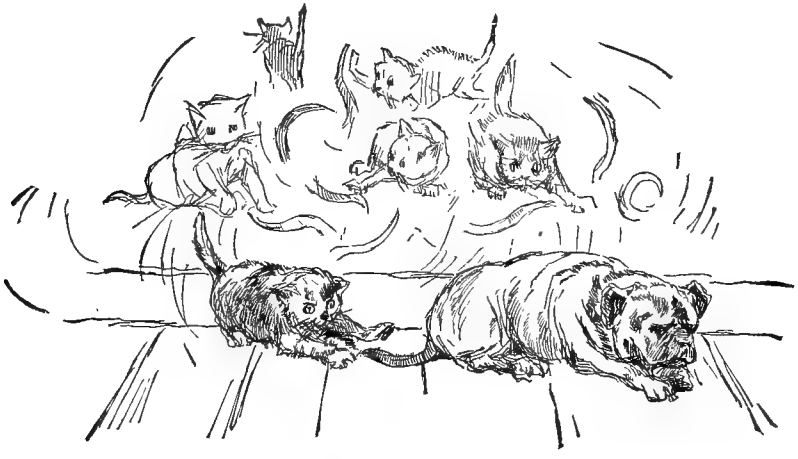


Then she said I was cross, and one day, when I was asleep, she came up and began to play with my tail. I just wagged it ever so hard, and it hit her and knocked her down. Then she found out I was somebody. Since that time we have been good friends.

[1] Pronounced Sy-ke.

One day she was very ill-mannered in her eating. She ate too fast. I told her to lap her milk slowly, and not spill it all over the floor. She said that she ate as well as I did. Don't you think that was rude? I sat down and gave her a good scolding for "talking back to her elders." She seemed ashamed of herself, for I have noticed she eats with more care now.

Whenever my master spoke to me Psyche would mew as loud as she could. I told her "Children must be seen and not heard," and the next time he spoke she only sat and looked on. In a few days I will give her some lessons in talking loud and singing at her meals. When she grows up I think she will be a model cat. Anyhow, her manners will be good.



DINNER FOR THREE.

LITTLE Eva took a plateful of dinner out into the wood-shed, to feed her kitties.

When she called them the black kit and the gray kit both ran to the plate. They each seized a bit of meat, and began to shake it and growl over it.

"Don't quarrel, little kits!" said Eva.

When the meat was all picked out the kitties ran away.

"Oh, now they have wasted all the rest of the dinner," said Eva.

But just then old Dobbin, the horse, saw the plate. He had been turned loose into the yard to eat grass. Dobbin came and put his head in at the door, and he ate up every bit of the vegetables and bread.

Then Eva laughed, and clapped her hands.

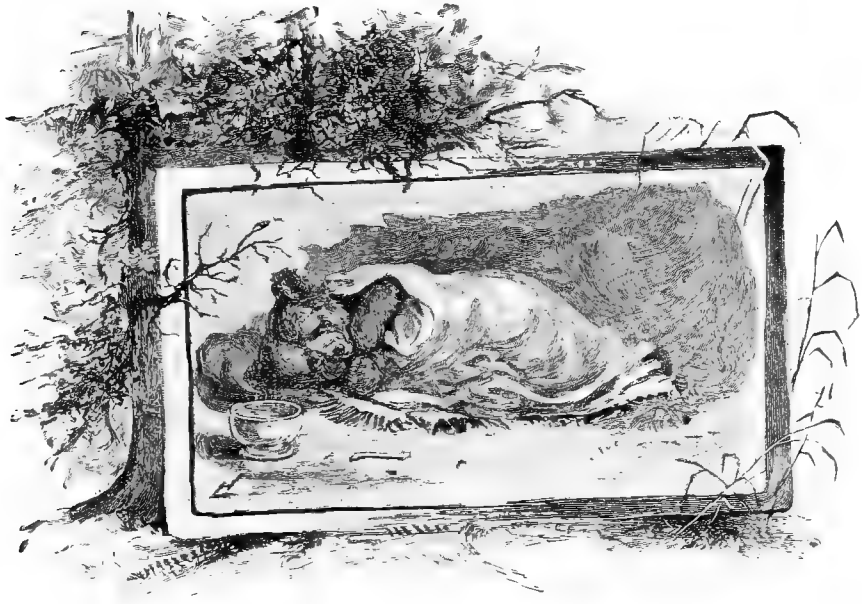
"O mamma!" she said, "it is just like the story of Jack Sprat in my 'Mother Goose': —

> "'Twixt them both they cleared the cloth,
> And licked the platter clean!'"

TILLIE TEXAS.

We have had some funny boarders at our house. Tillie Texas was perhaps the funniest. She came one hot summer day, dressed in a heavy black coat.

She was an entire stranger to all of us. She did not look or act like any one who had ever before been among us. We were very

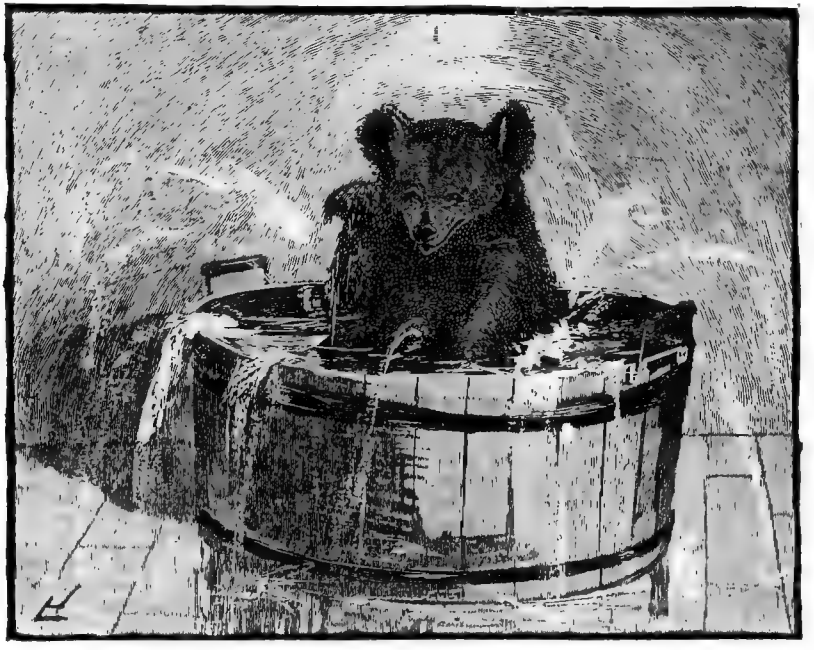


shy of her at first, and didn't give her a warm welcome, but by and by we grew to like her and enjoy her society.

What do you suppose she was? A lady? No. A little girl? No. I'll tell you. She was — a little bear! She was only six weeks old when caught in Texas, and was sent to our landlady's daughter by express. She wore her name, "Tillie Texas," on a silver necklace.

Poor little thing! She was too young to leave her mother, and at first she cried like a baby if she was left alone. The landlady took her to her own room at night and covered her up in a tiny bed.

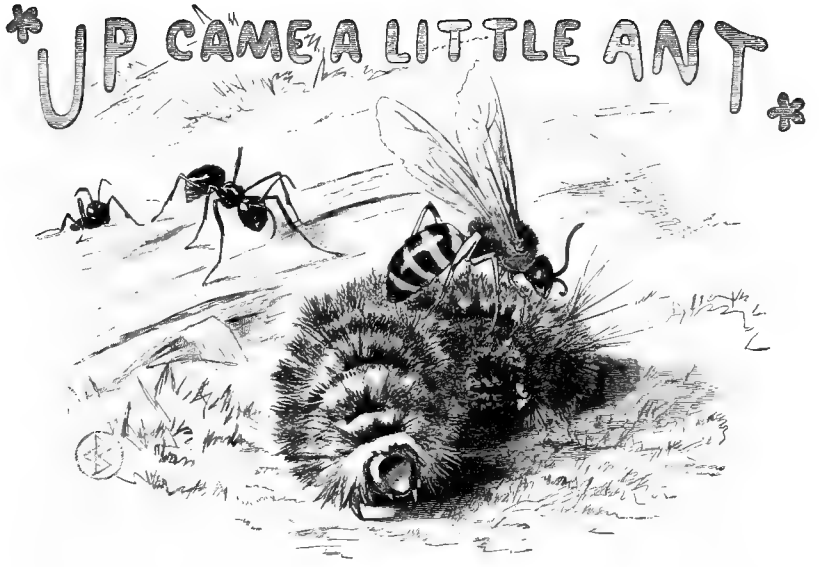
At midnight she would get up and warm a bowl of milk. Tillie would sit up and clasp her paws around the bowl to hold it steady. Then she drank all she wanted. After this she would lie down again and suck her paw till she fell asleep. She made a humming



noise all the while, that sounded like the buzzing of hundreds of bees.

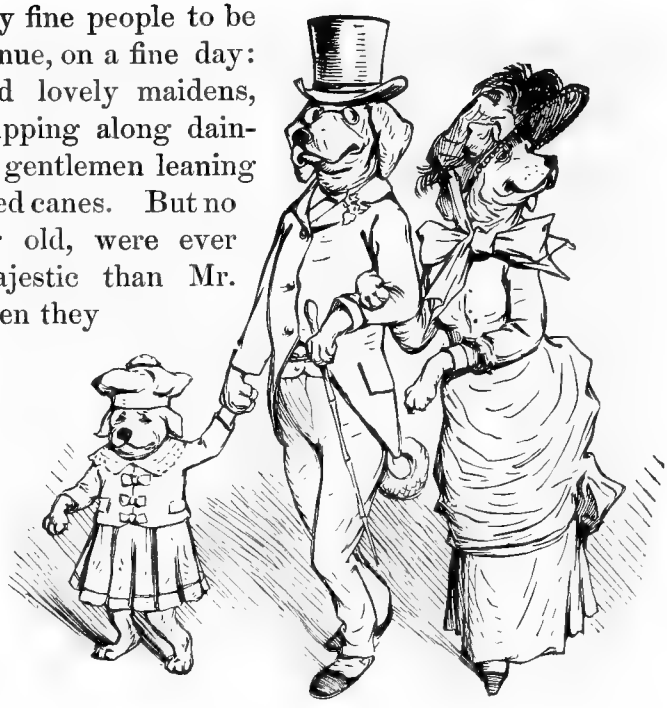
When she grew older she took great delight in standing in the wood-shed door and attracting a crowd of boys to the fence. When she was tired of walking on her hind feet and holding a stick in her paws she would go behind the door, and close it in the laughing faces of the children.

Tillie enjoyed jumping into a tub of water on a warm summer day and splashing it all over herself. The little girls were careful to draw their dresses close about them if they passed her in the water; for she was very affectionate, and always wanted to give them a hug with her wet paws.



One day I saw some hornets on a bank near our house. I went a little nearer, and saw a hornet which had captured a caterpillar. He tried hard to carry him off, when up came a little ant. He looked at them a moment, and then ran round to the side of the hornet. With a peculiar jump the ant bit the hornet in the side. The hornet did not seem to mind it very much, and went on pulling all the harder at the caterpillar. The ant ran round to the other side, and bit the hornet again. The hornet flew up about an inch, and came back. He was just going to take hold of the caterpillar, when the ant bit him in the head, and he flew away disgusted. He left the caterpillar to the ant, who, with the help of the family, carried him to their home.

A CAT-ASTROPHE.



THERE are many fine people to be seen on Fifth avenue, on a fine day: stately dames and lovely maidens, pretty children tripping along daintily, and grave old gentlemen leaning on their gold-headed canes. But no people, young or old, were ever finer or more majestic than Mr. and Mrs. Dog, when they went out for a walk one bright May morning. Mr. Dog wore a bright green cut-away coat, yellow Nankeen trousers, a tall hat, and patent-leather shoes; and with his gold-bowed spectacles, a flower in his button-hole, and a curl in his tail, he looked quite the gentleman; while Mrs. Dog was really splendidly dressed, in a blue silk gown, a straw bonnet of the newest shape, with blue ostrich feathers in it, and bronze kid slippers. Little Tray, their dear and only child, a most sweet and charming puppy, wore kilts and a Scotch cap, and hoped that he might be taken for a grown-up Scotch terrier.

Now, as this happy and united family walked slowly along, well pleased with themselves and each other and everything else, it happened that they met a vagrant cat. This cat was sitting on the curbstone, sunning herself, as the Dog family approached. She was evidently a wretched, low creature, with no manners whatever; for she had no clothes save her own smutty, dusty black coat, and she was eating a mouse, which no well-bred cat ever does in public, as

you are well aware. Little Tray Dog had never seen a cat before, as his parents did not approve of the family, and he had been carefully kept from all low company. "What is that, papa?" he asked, pointing to the cat.

"That, my dear," said Mr. Dog, "is a cat, a very low kind of animal. Shoo, cat! Go away!"

"Yah!" said the cat, rising and fixing her green eyes on little Tray, with a fiendish grin. "Ya-ou-ow! Ss-s-s-s-s! He-a-a-ah!"

And instead of rubbing her nose on the ground, to show her humble respect for the great Dog family, this impudent creature actually humped her back, stuck out her tail, and showed every tooth in her head, in a way very alarming to the tender puppy.

"Boo-hoo!" cried poor Tray, catching hold of his mother's dress and trying to hide behind it. "O papa! send it away! I'm afraid of it. Boo! yow! yap! yap! yap!"

"Beast!" said Mr. Dog, sternly. "How dare you grin at my child? Be off this instant, or I shall"—

"S-s-s-s-s! bah!" said the cat. "Be off yourself, old Yellow-legs. Sidewalk aint yours! Mia-u-ow! F-f-f-f!"

This insolence was more than Mr. Dog could bear; besides, was not his darling Tray shivering and squeaking with terror behind the blue silk gown? "My dear," he said grandly, "protect our sweet child for a moment, while I chastise this vile cat as she deserves. In one instant I will be with you again." And, grasping his cane firmly, Mr. Dog took a step towards the vagrant cat.

"Oh! yah! Come on!" said the cat, with a grin of defiance; and she scampered off down the street, with Mr. Dog in full pursuit. Down that street and up the next; round the corner, across the square, through the alley-way, along the avenue beyond; on went the vagrant cat at lightning speed, and on went the great Mr. Dog in pursuit, his green coat-tails flying, his hat off, his ears and tail streaming in the wind.

"Yah!" cried the cat, looking back over her shoulder. "In one instant you'll be with them again, eh? F-f-f-f! S-s-s-s! H-a-a-a-h! Come on, old Yellow-legs!"

Up the next avenue, across the square, down the street, through the court; what is that queer-looking place at the end of the court? There is a rush, a squeal, a scramble, a splash, and a howl; and the vagrant cat is sitting on top of a brick wall, and the great Mr. Dog is wallowing in a muddy pool at the foot of it.

Oh, DEAR! ME!!! Just look at the green cut-away coat, and the yellow Nankeen trousers, and the patent-leather boots! And think of Mrs. Dog's feelings, and little Tray's feelings, when they see their husband and father in this condition.

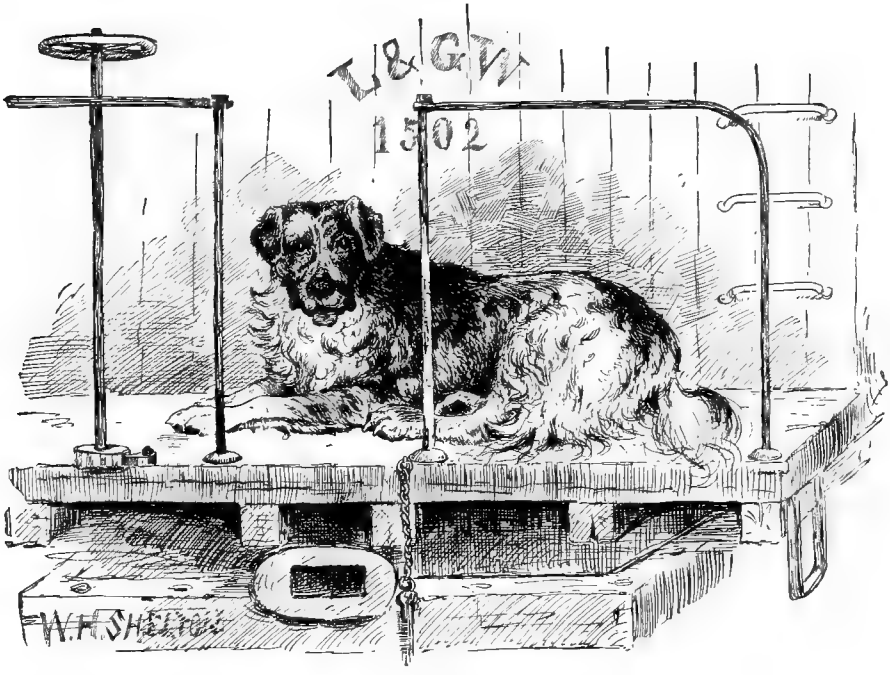
But the vagrant cat danced a hornpipe on the top of the brick wall. "Ha! ha! ha!" she said. "Ye-a-ou-ow! F-sssssssssss! Yah!" for such was her impudent disposition.

RAILWAY JACK.

A DOG at Lewes, near Brighton, has gained the name of Railway Jack, owing to his having travelled over most of the railways in England.

Jack jumps on a train that is just about to start, and while the train is in motion he looks about the country as if he enjoyed the ride. No doubt he does.

When the train stops Jack jumps down and makes friends at



once with the station-master. He is well known to many station-masters in England. Jack seldom visits any station more than once. He is fond of change.

Some time ago Jack was away from his home at Lewes longer than usual. His friends gave him up for lost, thinking he had been killed on some railway. But one day Jack came home, to the joy of all who knew him. His leg had been hurt by some train, and this, no doubt, was what had kept him so long from home.

The wife of the manager of the London and Brighton line gave Jack a collar, but some one was mean enough to steal it. Judge Hawkins, hearing of the loss when at Lewes, gave Jack another collar, which he seems proud to wear. He has won prizes at several exhibitions, and he often appears at the dog-shows with half-a-dozen medals round his neck.

FISHERMAN PUSSY.

MINNIKIN was hungry. Her mistress, Maidie, had gone off visiting, and Maidie's mamma was sick, and as for cook, every time she saw Minnikin she would say, "Scat! scat!"

So there was nobody to feed pussy. If she wanted something to eat she must find it herself. It was of no use to watch the mouse-hole, though she had looked at it so long that her head ached.

The bird she tried to catch flew away, saying something that sounded like, "Don't you wish you might?"

Minnikin grew thoughtful. She walked down to the shore, where the blue water washed the white sand, and sat down. Do you think she was admiring the ocean? Oh, no; she was watching for fish.

After a while there was a ripple. Quick as a flash pussy dipped in her paw. When she drew it out there was a little fish held fast by her sharp claw. She ate the fish, and felt better.

The next day she was hungry again. She remembered the fish, and ran down to the beach.

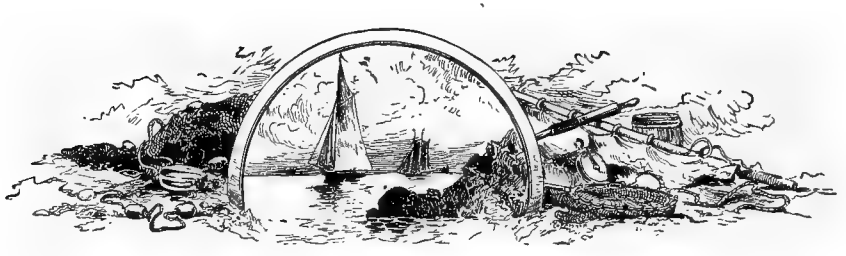
This time there was something long and black moving about, close to the shore. Minnikin forgot that she didn't like to wet her paws. She jumped right into the water, and brought to land a real live eel.

Pussy must have thought, "Now I'll treat cook better than she did me;" for she seized the squirming, wriggling creature with her teeth, and carried it home, into the kitchen, and laid it at cook's feet. Cook thought it was a snake. How she did scream!

Maidie and her papa had just come in from the station. They ran to see what was the matter; and it made them both laugh heartily to see cook so frightened by a harmless eel.

If Minnikin went fishing after that she did it for her own amusement, for Maidie did not let her go hungry any more.

I don't think, however, that cook ever knew that pussy meant to return good for evil.

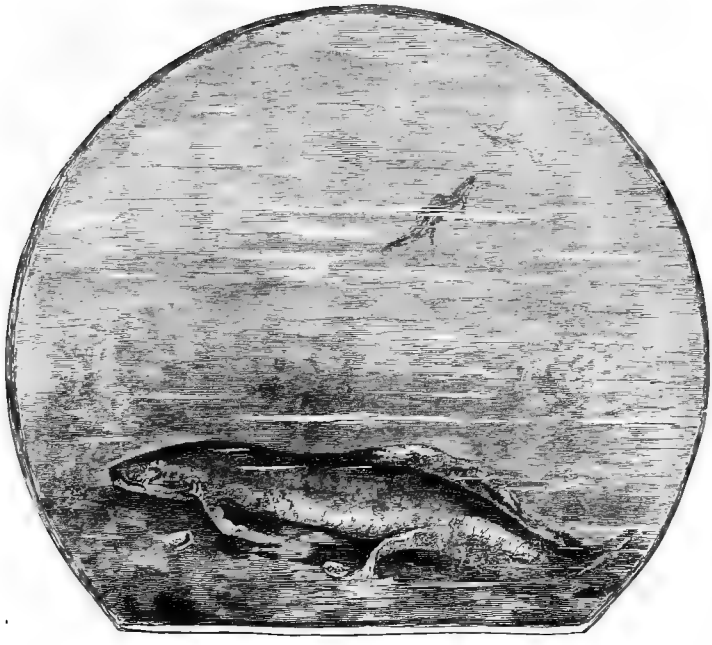


A BAD NEIGHBOR.

THE next time you go to Africa, my dears, be sure to bring me back a lepidosiren, will you? I am very anxious to have one. Lep-i-do-si-ren! Can't you say that? Well, it *is* rather a hard word. You may call it mud-fish instead, if you like that better, though I am not sure that it *is* a fish.

There is a difference of opinion on the subject of this creature. One very learned man, with green spectacles, calls it a fish; another, whose spectacles are blue (and who is bald besides, having *thought* all the hair off his head), vows that it is a reptile. Now, I don't wear spectacles, and I am not bald, — so really I cannot pretend to decide the matter; but suppose you and I just please ourselves, and call it the mud-fish, whether or no.

There is some reason for that name, because at home it lives in the — "Mud! !" says Billy. Quite so. What an intelligent child you are, William! But now about finding one for me. When you are in Africa, as I was saying, and in some very hot place, — say in Timbuctoo, where your Uncle Simon lives, — you must know how to look for the mud-fish.



If it is in the rainy season it will be easy enough to find him, for he is swimming about, like any other fish, in that pretty little river which flows near your uncle's house. But in the hot season it will be harder to find him. The river is dried up then; there is not a drop of water ; the reeds and rushes that were once so fresh and green are withered and dry, and even the mud of the river-bed is baked into a hard, stony flooring, which looks as if it had never known a drop of moisture. Surely no living creature can be here, save such as can live on land. Not so fast! Take your spade and dig up carefully some of this hard-baked earth. Dig deeper!— carefully now; spread out the earth you have dug up. Ah! what is that queer-looking lump, from which the dry earth falls away? That is what you have been looking for. That is Mr. Mud-fish's cocoon, and Mr. Mud-fish is comfortably asleep inside it. You see he knew well enough what to do when he found the water was all drying up around him. He wriggled his way deep, deep down into

the mud, his eyes being so conveniently made that the wet soil does not hurt them. When he thinks he has gone deep enough he curls himself round, and wraps his tail round his head by way of a nightcap. Then he brings out of his body a quantity of a smooth, slimy substance, which he carries somewhere about him, and with this he plasters the inside of the mud-cell in which he is lying, making it all smooth, and binding the particles of earth together, so that there is no danger of their cracking apart from the heat. Having done this thoroughly, Mr. Mud-fish goes to sleep, and he sleeps, and sleeps, and sleeps; and never wakes up until the rains have come again, and the welcome drops, sinking down through the softening mud, loosen the walls of his cell and let him out again.

If you were to put one of these earthy cocoons into a tub of water it would fall to pieces at once, and you would see the sleeper with his tail wrapped round his head, just as I have told you. At first he would be very stupid and sleepy, but after a time he would wake up; and if he should live and do well you would find him as curious a creature in his waking as in his sleeping hours.

Did you say your Uncle Simon had an aquarium? That is very fortunate, for now you can watch all the queer ways of the mud-fish. Take a small piece of raw meat in your hand, and make a splashing in the water with your finger. He will rise slowly, snatch the meat away, and go down to the bottom to eat it. Now watch him as he eats it. He takes the very tip of it between his sharp teeth, and gives it a tremendous bite, seeming to bite with his whole head; then he sucks it in a little further, and gives it another bite; this he does again and again, till he has bitten through the whole length of the piece. Then, if you please, he shoots it out of his mouth, catches it by the tip again, and bites it all over again, and then again. Three times he goes through this singular process, and then, with a quick jerk, he swallows the meat. He will always do this, every time you feed him, and will never swallow the food until he has chewed it all three times. It is a very good thing to chew one's food thoroughly, but I do not recommend this way of doing it for anybody except a mud-fish.

Oh! oh! I forgot to tell you that you must not keep him with other fish, but in a separate part of the aquarium, for he has very cruel and unmannerly ways. He will swim quietly up under another fish till he is quite close to him; then, with a quick dart, he will seize the poor creature, and bite a great piece right out of him, his strong, sharp teeth cutting through scales, flesh, and bones. He never takes more than one bite out of each fish, but takes his morsel down to chew, and leaves the poor victim bleeding and dying in misery. That is why I have called him a "bad neighbor;" and it is a good name for him, for, say what you will, a *good* neighbor does *not* bite.

TOMMIE, A PET PRAIRIE-DOG.

When I first saw Tommie his little round head was sticking out of a gentleman's coat-pocket.

"Here, Miss Jean," said the gentleman; "I have brought a little prairie-dog for you to tame and pet."

I was glad, and thanked my friend very kindly. Tommie's home was a hole in the ground, and there he lived with an owl and a rattlesnake. The gentleman had caught him by pouring water in the hole. Tommie ran out to keep from being drowned.

I tied him to a little stake in the yard and carried him some bread and water. In a few days he knew me well. He would stand on his hind feet and bark whenever I came near.

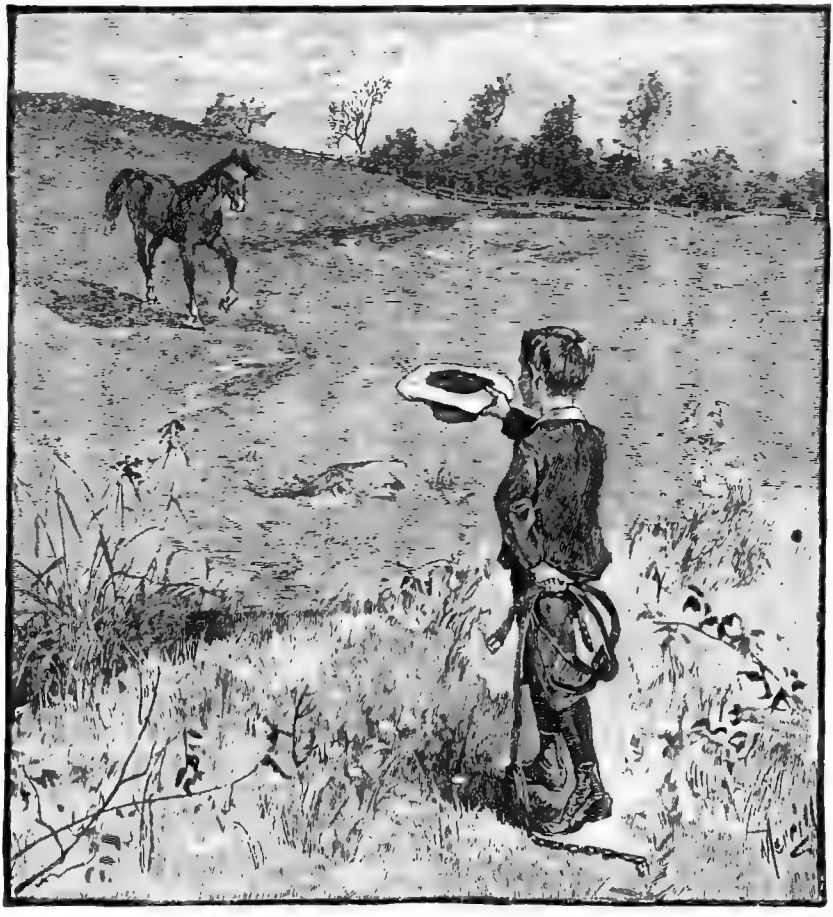
He was a very active little fellow, and was never still except when asleep, or when I scratched his head. Often when sleepy he would dart up my sleeve, nestle on my shoulder, and sleep there for an hour. When he became very tame I untied the string and let him go where he pleased. The house was on a farm, and sometimes he would wander a quarter of a mile away. I would stand on the porch and call "Tommie," and he would return, jumping and barking all the way.

One day he ate too much squash, and it made him sick. I found him standing on his hind feet, with one hand on his fat little stomach and the other on his head. He looked like a dejected little old gentleman. He never ate squash again.

When it was cold he would stand by the fire and warm his hands like a little boy. When I left my former home I brought him with me; but he soon died. I was very sorry, and missed him very much.

CATCHING THE COLT.

JAMES was a very clever boy. One day his father said to him, "James, do you think you could catch the gray colt for me?"

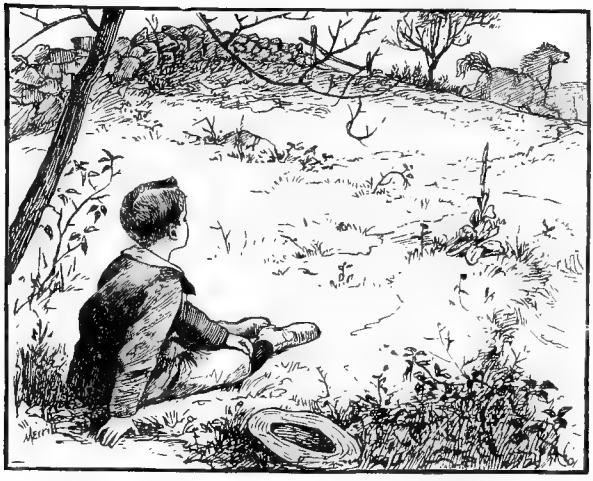


"Think?" said the boy; "I *know* I could, father. Only let me get some corn and a bridle, and you shall see."

So James filled his hat with corn, and, taking the bridle in his left hand, went down to the pasture. The gray colt was standing quietly, nibbling the tender grass, when he saw James coming.

Up went his head with a quick toss, and he gave a suspicious sniff. James held out the corn, and spoke to him quietly. "Come, boy!" he said. "Good Jerry! good boy! come and have some corn."

Now, Jerry liked tender grass, but he liked corn better. It would make a pleasant change, he thought; so he walked slowly towards the hat which James held out to him, still sniffing, and stopping every few steps to make sure that he was doing quite the right thing. Suddenly he said to himself, "Why does that boy keep his other hand behind him?" He looked down and caught sight of the end of the bridle as it hung down. "Humph!" said the gray colt. "I know what *that* means, young gentleman. You may be a clever boy, but I *think* I am a clever colt. We shall see about this!"



Accordingly Jerry came up quite close to James, who held the hat out invitingly, while his other hand was all ready to clap the bridle on the moment the gray nose was well in the corn. But Jerry knew a trick worth two of that. Down went his nose, slowly, carefully; now he sniffed at the edge of the hat; now his nose was almost in it; when suddenly, with a quick jerk of his head, he knocked it out of the boy's hand. Then, wheeling swiftly, he presented his two white hind feet in a gentle, but decided manner, which left James but one course to pursue. He tumbled backward on the grass; and while he was picking himself up and rubbing his shins and his shoulders, gray Jerry ate the corn, and then seizing the hat, which was a straw one, galloped off with a whinny of triumph, to munch it quietly under the oak-tree.

James walked slowly back to the stable, hung up the bridle, and then went into the house.

"Well, my boy," said his father. "Did you catch the colt?"

"Yes!" replied James. "At least, I caught part of him."

"Part of him?" said the father. "What do you mean by that? What part of him?"

"His two hind feet!" said James.

A QUEER ANIMAL.

When I was a little girl grandpapa gave me a book all about animals. How I liked that book! Mamma used to read it to me, just as your mamma reads to you.

There was a picture of one very queer animal in the book. He was not at all pretty. He had a big hump on his back; he had

long legs and a long neck, and such an ugly head! But I used to like to hear about him.

He was a camel. Did you ever see a camel? In the countries where camels live the people ride on them. They cross the great deserts of sand on the backs of camels. Do you think you would like to ride on one? The little children ride in a kind of basket.

The people often travel many days in the great deserts without finding any water. They always carry water with them in great leather bottles. But the camels themselves can go many days without water. They do not get thirsty.

I wish you could see a baby camel, — a baby camel is such a queer little thing. His body is small, and his legs are very, very long. He has big black eyes. His hair is fluffy and yellow.

It is a funny sight to see the camels eat. The driver spreads a cloth on the ground and pours the grain upon it. Then all the camels sit down on the ground around the cloth and eat. It is just like a picnic.

They behave very well at their table. They bend their long necks down to the grain. They look as if they were bowing politely to each other. Sometimes a camel feels cross, and will not eat at all. Do you ever feel so cross that you cannot eat?

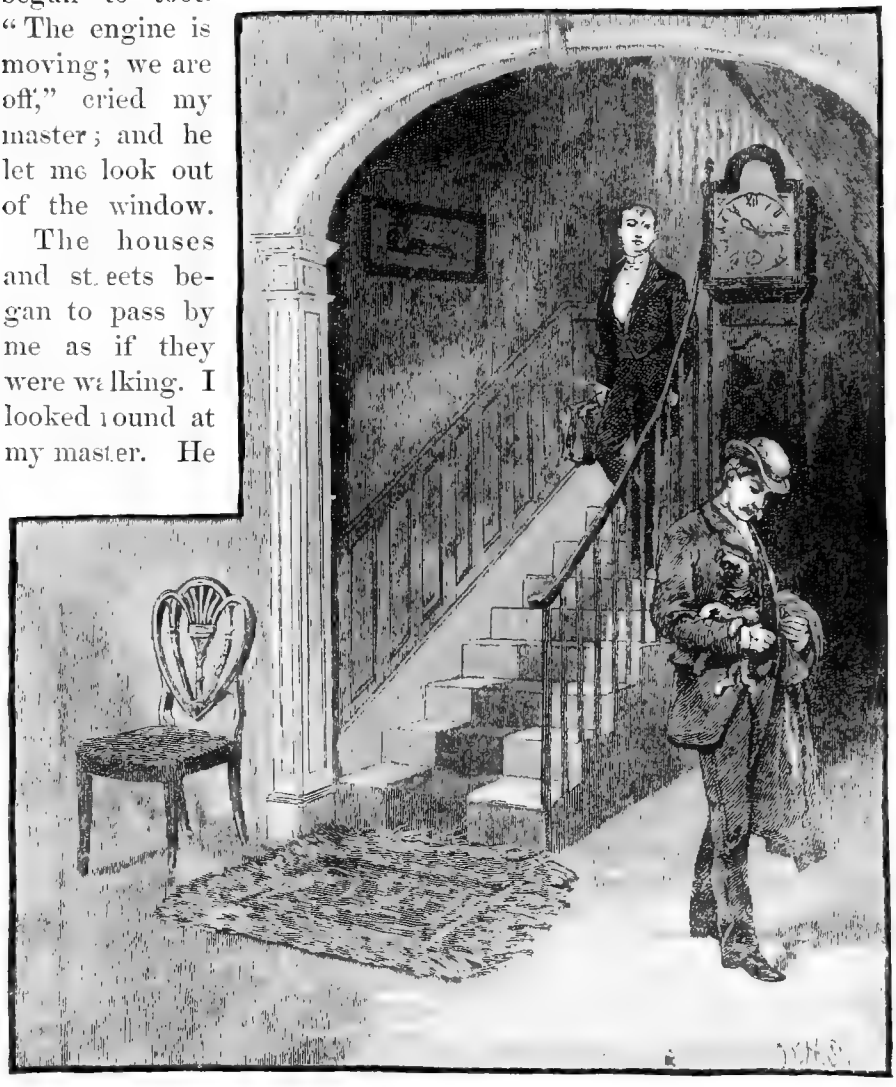
SCAMP'S VISIT TO CONEY ISLAND.

ONE day my master told me to get ready to go away. He began packing up my neck-ribbons and pug-dog harness. I wondered where he was going. At last he took me in his arms. Wyatt, the waiter, carried his valise down-stairs, and we got into the carriage. My master's sisters and brothers were there, too.

We drove away, and at last stopped at a big house, and my master said, "Here's the station." Then we got into a sort of long carriage, with seats

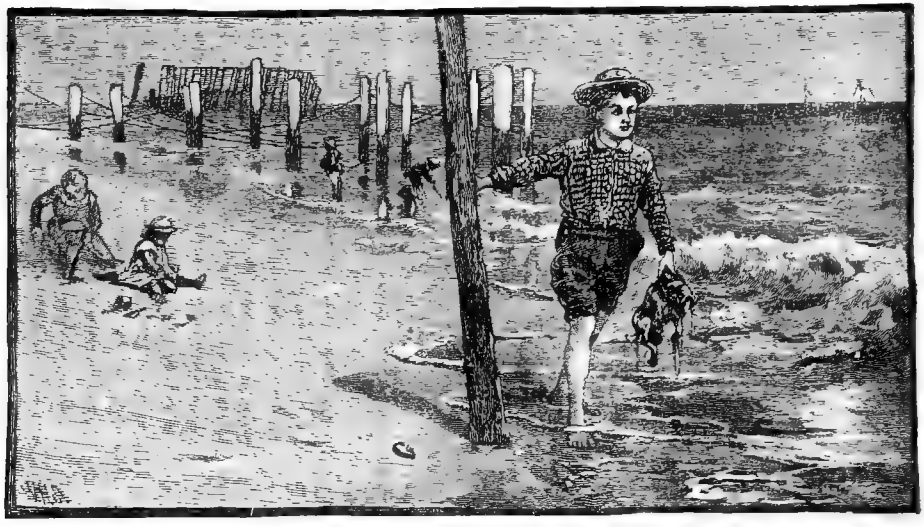
on either side, and a great many windows in it. My master told me it was a car. Then something in front gave a loud scream and began to toot. "The engine is moving; we are off," cried my master; and he let me look out of the window.

The houses and streets began to pass by me as if they were walking. I looked round at my master. He



laughed, and said, "Scamp doesn't know what to make of this." I did not, indeed; I looked out for a long time, until I got tired, and then lay down and went to sleep.

When I awoke, my master said, "We are at Coney Island." We all got out, and went into the big house he called a hotel. After we had dinner we all walked out. It was very sandy, and water was running up and down upon the sand. I looked at the water. I saw it away off in the distance. Then it came running in towards me, and after making a great noise it splashed and rolled up on the sand almost at my feet. Then it went back again.



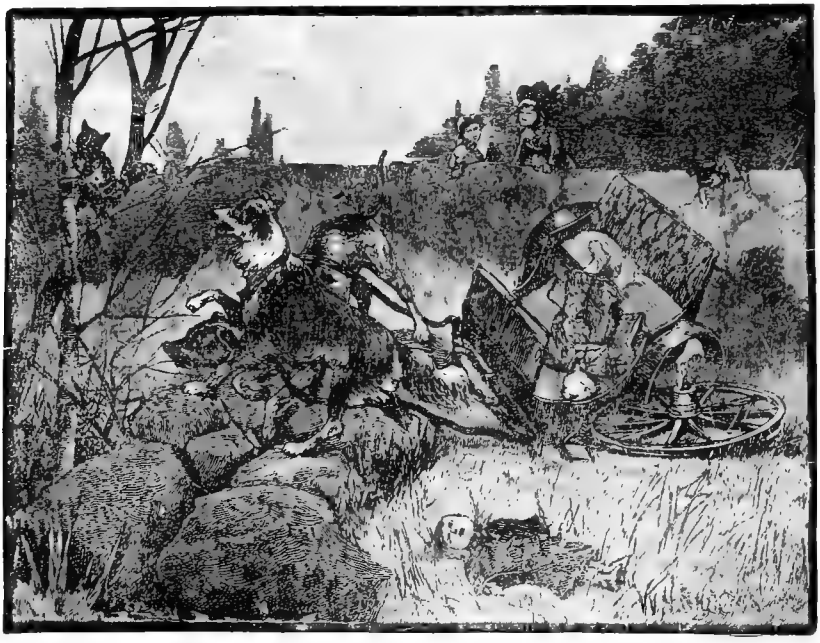
I grew angry, for the water kept doing this for ever so long. My master wanted to go up the sand and see all the funny houses and people. I did not want to go, but wished to bite the water because it chased me. At last I made a dart at the water as it was running away. I ran down the sand, when, oh, dear! a great big wave — that's what my master called it — came up. It splashed all over me. I fell down and began to roll. My master called me, but I could not get up. The water came all over me, and I thought I should drown.

I hate water. All pug-dogs do. Another wave came up, and I know I should have been washed away if a boy had not run out into the water and caught me. My master gave me a good scolding when I got safe on land again. I can tell you I did not like my first day at Coney Island.

THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED.

Of course it was the cat's fault. It always is, whenever there is a cat in the case at all, I notice. But the cat could not have done it all by herself if she had tried.

You see, Uncle Charles had given this fine new carriage to Ethel and Lily, and had taught Dash and Diver, the two dogs, how to draw it nicely. That was most delightful; but Ethel and Lily could not enjoy anything properly unless their children enjoyed it,



too. What mother can? So Armida Sophia and the Chinese Ambassador were put into the carriage, and sent out for a drive. Armida Sophia was dressed in a green silk frock, a pink bonnet, and a white muslin mantle, and her appearance was most gratifying. She did not speak to the Chinese Ambassador, because she did not want him to find out that she could not talk Chinese. He, however, was of an amiable and cheerful disposition, and nodded

constantly in reply to the remarks which Armida Sophia did not make. The dogs trotted along quietly, and Ethel and Lily looked across the hedge in delight.

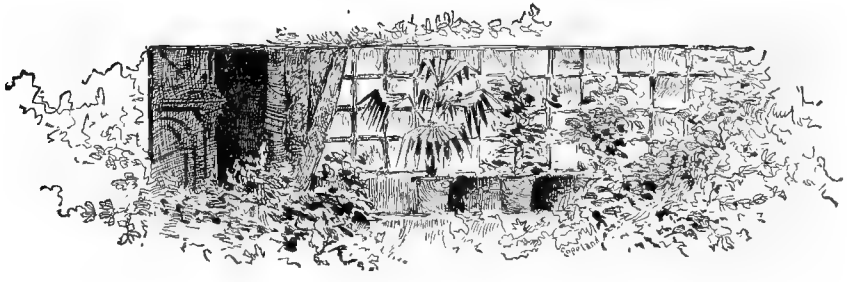
"How well Armida holds herself!" said Lily. "She has real dignity. Papa said so last night, when she fell into the jam, and kept her back perfectly straight all the time. It is a great thing to have a doll like that."

"She needn't be *quite* so stiff to the Ambassador!" said Ethel. "She seems to forget that he is third cousin to the emperor, and that his pigtail is three times as long as himself."

Lily was about to reply in defence of her beloved Armida Sophia, when suddenly — the cat appeared! And then, all in a minute, everything happened. The cat ran up a tree (doubtless with a deep design), and the dogs ran after her; and the carriage caught on some stones, and the wheel came off, and it tipped over, and Armida Sophia was thrown out, and the Chinese Ambassador stood on his head, and was nearly strangled with his pigtail. Ethel and Lily shrieked and screamed; the dogs barked and leaped at the tree, and the designing cat mewed and shivered on the topmost branch. But Armida Sophia lay on the grass and kept her back perfectly straight.

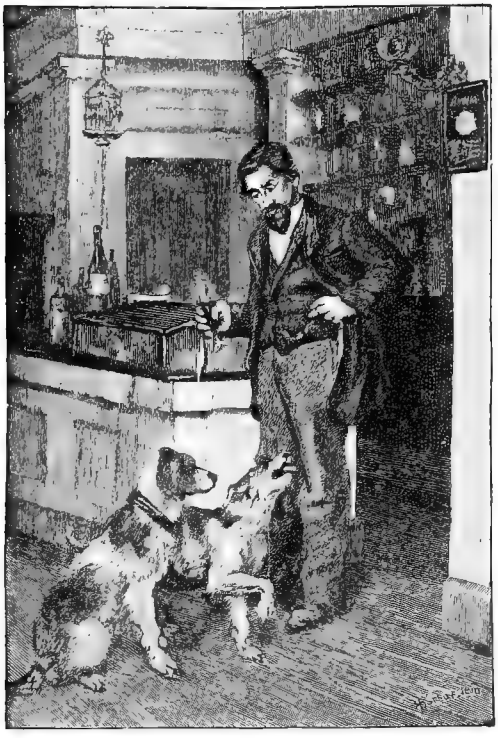
"I can die with dignity," she said, "and he will never know that I could not speak Chinese."

The Ambassador stood on his head, and tried to keep his eyes from rolling out. "I can no longer nod my head in answer to her remarks," he said; "but it is true that she did not make any."



A DOG HOSPITAL.

One day last winter a druggist heard something scratching at the door of his shop. Then there was a soft whine. He opened the door. A strange dog limped in, holding up a bleeding paw. How did the dog know that he could be cured in a drug-store?



The good apothecary took care of the dog's foot, and it soon got well. After that the dog came every morning to the shop, and wagged his tail thankfully. He was never in such haste as to forget this duty.

A few weeks later, when he called at the shop, he brought another dog. This one also had a bitten paw, and was crying with pain. How the good doctor laughed to see this new cripple! But he cured him, too. Now he is expecting other dogs.

All this took place in the great city of Paris. There is a hospital there for lost dogs and cats. They are kindly fed and cared for till they find good masters. Perhaps the dog with the lame paw had lived at this hospital. If he had he might have learned to know a doctor by his scent. Perhaps this was why he scratched at the apothecary's door.

Not long ago a grand ball was given in Paris to aid the dog and cat asylum. Was that not a strange party? Well, really kind people care for even dogs and cats.

THE PET LIZARDS.

AMONG Uncle Will's pets were some gray lizards. A great many of these little fellows are found near the city of Washington. They are four or five inches long. They are nice and clean to the touch, and make amusing pets.

You will see them sitting on the walls and fences, in the sun, and you can catch them easily, if you know how. You must go up to them very slowly, for if you make a swift motion they are off. When you get near enough grasp swiftly a little before the lizard's nose. If you grasp at the spot where he is you will only catch the end of his tail. Now a lizard drops his tail off as easily as a boy loses his jack-knife; so if you catch only the lizard's tail you lose the rest of the lizard. One of Uncle Will's lizards had a broken tail, but he seemed just as happy for all that.

If you are kind to the lizard, and tickle him gently with your finger, he will soon be tame. He will catch flies on the table, and will also come and take insects from your hand.

In the tropics the lizards are more nimble. It is harder to catch them. Here is one good way. Take a long, slender switch. Then approach the lizard softly. When you are near enough hit him a blow with the switch. He will tumble over, and while he is scrambling you can pounce upon him. But look out! He is not tame yet, and may bite you. To be sure it will not hurt much. The lizards in the tropics are green and golden, and red and purple, and, indeed, all colors. They are beautiful creatures, and most of them may be tamed, like their gray cousins in Virginia.

But sometimes they are very large and fierce. I was once sailing in a canoe with some Indians. We passed beneath a tree. A lizard, nearly as long as a broom-handle, leaped down from a branch. If

I had not bowed my head he would have hit me. As it was, he struck the side of the canoe and fell into the river. One of the

Indians cried out, "He mean bite!" Whether he meant bite, or not, I cannot tell. All I know is this: I should not want a lizard, with such a great mouth and such sharp teeth, taking flies from my hand; should you?

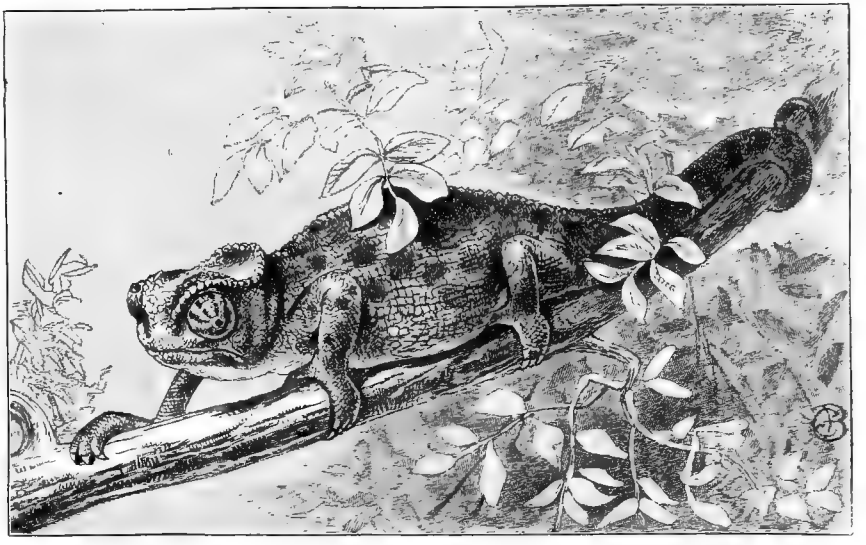
A FANTASTIC FLY-CATCHER.

Come with me into my garden, and I will show you something. Where is my garden? Why, it is in Africa, of course; where else should it be? Don't ask foolish questions, but come down to the farther end of the garden, and sit down on this bench, under the thick green leaves of the cork-tree. Now look at that branch, and tell me what you see on it. "Leaves?" Yes; but what else? "Nothing else?" Why, where are your eyes? Put your finger on that leaf and see—. "Oh! oh! It is alive!" Indeed, it is very much alive.

That is a chameleon, and a very singular fellow he is. He is a kind of lizard, and — see! Look, how his color changes! He was green when we first saw him, and now he is nearly black, with round yellow spots all over him. He can change the color of his dress whenever he pleases, without having to change the dress itself; that is a great convenience. He is so perfectly still you might think him asleep if it were not for his green, big, round eyes, which are constantly moving. He can move them in different directions at the same time; which is more than you can do, or your school-ma'am either. One up and the other down; one forward and the other back; truly, that is the way to use one's eyes. It seems very paltry to be obliged to move both at once, and in the same direction. Ah! he moves a little, just a very little;

now he is still again. I think he sees that large fly which has just lighted on the branch. He says to himself, "It is dinner-time." (N.B. It is always dinner-time whenever he sees a fly or any other insect.)

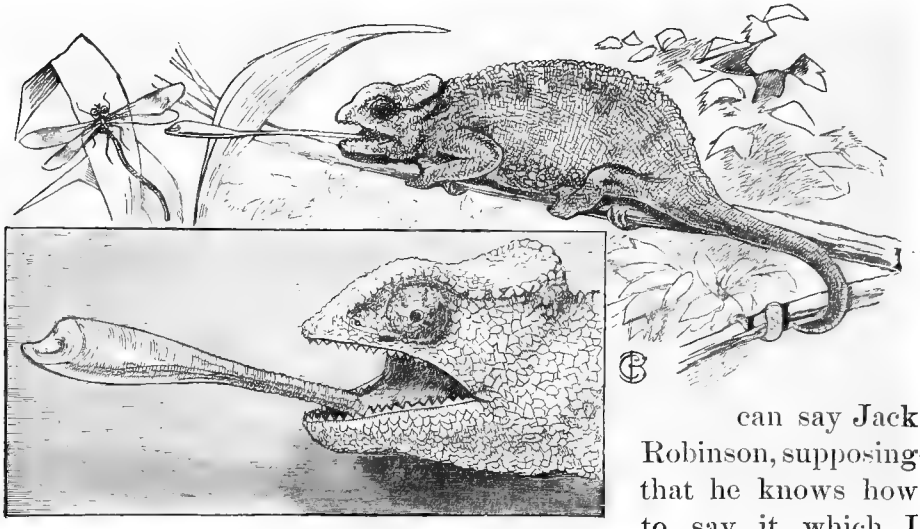
Now, how do you think he is going to catch that fly? It is so far off he certainly cannot reach it from where he sits, and his



motions are so slow that the fly might be half a mile away before he had uncoiled his tail from the branch round which it is closely twisted.

Flash! What was that? Out from his mouth darted a long, slender, round thing, as long as his whole body almost; it darts back again, with the fly on its tip; and Mr. Chameleon swallows quietly the first course of his dinner. That long, slender thing, as straight as a billiard-cue, and as sure of its aim, was the gentleman's tongue. "What a very remarkable tongue!" you say, and you say well. It is gun and fishing-rod, knife, fork, and spoon, to the chameleon. He will sit there for hours, perhaps, perfectly

motionless, except for his tongue; and whenever a fly, or other insect, alights within reach of that wonderful member, flash! it is out and in again, and the unhappy insect is devoured before he

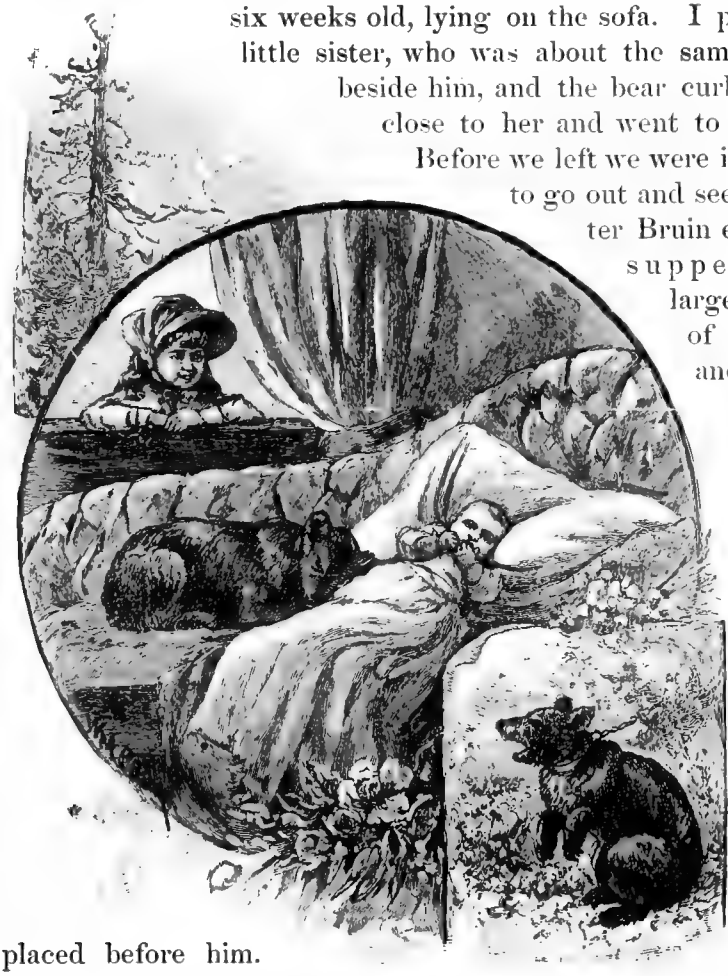


can say Jack Robinson, supposing that he knows how to say it, which I doubt — Ah! look! You did not look quickly enough, my dear In the time that it took you to turn your head a dragon-fly came, and was seen, and was conquered, and the last wing of him has just disappeared from view inside the chameleon's gaping jaws. And now I do believe the creature is changing color again! Yes! the yellow spots fade out, and the black lightens, until now he is a light brown all over, — just the color of a dead leaf. Pop! Another fly has met his fate.

Have you seen enough of this very greedy fellow? Jump up then and shake the branch. Whisk! Scrabble! He is gone. You see he can make haste, after all, when he tries.

BABY BRUIN.

One day we stopped at the Hot Springs, about five miles from Helena, in Montana. When I went into the reception-room I was surprised to find a little cinnamon bear, six weeks old, lying on the sofa. I put my little sister, who was about the same age, beside him, and the bear curled up close to her and went to sleep. Before we left we were invited to go out and see Master Bruin eat his supper. A large pan of bread and milk



was placed before him. He put his fore paws into the pan, drew out the pieces of bread and ate them. Then he lapped the milk.

For a while he was allowed to run all over the house and grounds.

He soon found where the sugar and molasses were kept, and helped himself so freely that he had to be secured with a chain.

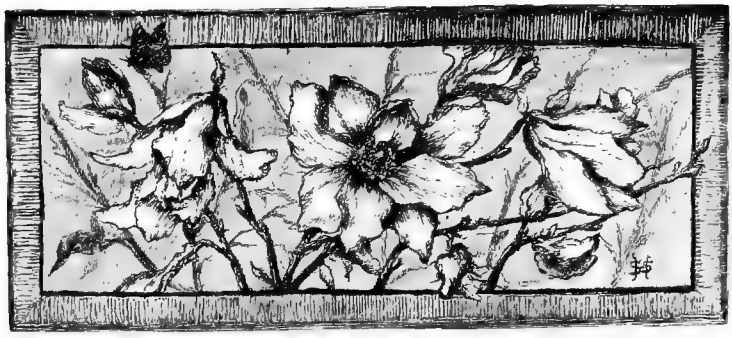
Not long ago Bruin slipped his chain from the pole to which it was fastened, and climbed a tree.

The chain caught on a branch, and he found himself hung up in mid-air. The proprietor of the springs heard his cries; hastening out, he found Bruin kicking violently, and striving to reach the body of the tree. After a great deal of trouble the bear was taken down, and was glad to find himself once more on solid ground.

During the summer we often called to interview "his Bearship." After we knew of his liking for sweets we made it a point to take some candy with us. He seemed to know us, and to watch for our coming. Standing erect, he would walk round us, hugging us with his fore paws. Then he snuffed at each pocket, to find where the sweets were hidden.

Sometimes he showed his savage nature, for he would snap and snarl if the promised treat were withheld.

When the cold weather came Bruin hid away in a large hole for his winter sleep. He did not show himself again until the warm days of spring.



A SAD STORY.

"Ah me!" said the sponge. "Dear! dear! dear! well-a-day!"

"What is the matter?" asked the bath-tub. "Have you been squeezed too hard, or has the nurse rubbed soap on you again? I know soap never agrees with you."

"I am rather exhausted by the squeezing, I confess," replied the sponge; "but it was not for that I sighed. I am gradually getting used to these daily tortures.

"But I was thinking about the past; about my beautiful home, from which I was so cruelly torn, and about the happy, happy life I led there."

"Tell me about it," said the bath-tub. "You have told me before, but I always find it interesting. My home was in a tin-shop, as you are aware. The society was good, but it was rather a dull place, on the whole. You lived, you say"—

"On the coast of Syria," said the sponge, with a sigh,—"the coast of beautiful Syria. There is a tiny bay, where the shore is bold and rocky. The rocks are bare above the water, but down below they are covered with lovely plants, and fringed with gay mosses, beautiful to behold. The bottom of the sea is covered with silver sand, and over it move the crimson and gold colored jelly-fish, the scarlet star-fish, and a thousand other brilliant creatures, making the neighborhood always attractive and delightful. On a certain ledge of rock, close by the bottom, I lived, as happy an animal as could be found in the Mediterranean Sea."

"What do you mean?" interrupted the nail-brush, which was new, and very ignorant. "You, an animal? I don't believe it. If your back were bone, and your hair pig-bristles, like mine, you might at least call yourself an animal product; but you have no back that I can see, nor hair either."

"You are extremely rude," said the sponge. "But you know no better, and ignorance should always be pitied rather than blamed. I was an animal, my young friend, though now, alas! I am only the skeleton of one.

"I lived, as I said, a very happy life on my rocky ledge. I never moved from it. I had no occasion to do so, even if I had been provided with legs, as many animals are. I never had any fancy for a roving life. To draw in the warm, delicious water through the thousand small holes and canals of my frame, and spout it out again through my large holes, was my chief occupation, and one of which I was never weary. The water was full of tiny creatures of all kinds, and these formed my food, and gave me always plenty to eat. In the spring I was always busy with my maternal duties. I brought out hundreds of lovely, little, round eggs, yellow and white,—the prettiest eggs you ever saw. In a short time they put out tiny feelers, a sort of fringe of waving lashes, like those things on the nurse's eyes; as soon as they appeared I knew my babies were ready to come out; and, sure enough, they soon broke through the egg-covering, and, waving their lashes, swam out into the sea.

"At first they stayed near me, delighting my heart with their pretty tricks; but very soon they felt the need of homes of their own, and went off to fix themselves on rocks, or coral-trees, and become, in their turn, full-grown sponges, like myself. I could not complain, for I had left my own mother in the same way. I never saw any of them again, except one dear child, who made his home on the shell of a large crab. He grew finely, and became a noble sponge; but the crab never seemed to mind him in the least, and carried him about with him wherever he went. In this way he often passed near my ledge, and as the crab was a friendly and sensible fellow we often had a pleasant chat together.

"One day, one dreadful, dreadful day, I was talking thus with my son and his landlord, when suddenly something huge and dark

was seen above us, swimming slowly downward through the clear water. At first I paid no attention to it, supposing it to be a shark, or some other large fish; but as it drew nearer I saw that it was no fish, but a strange and horrible monster, the like of which had

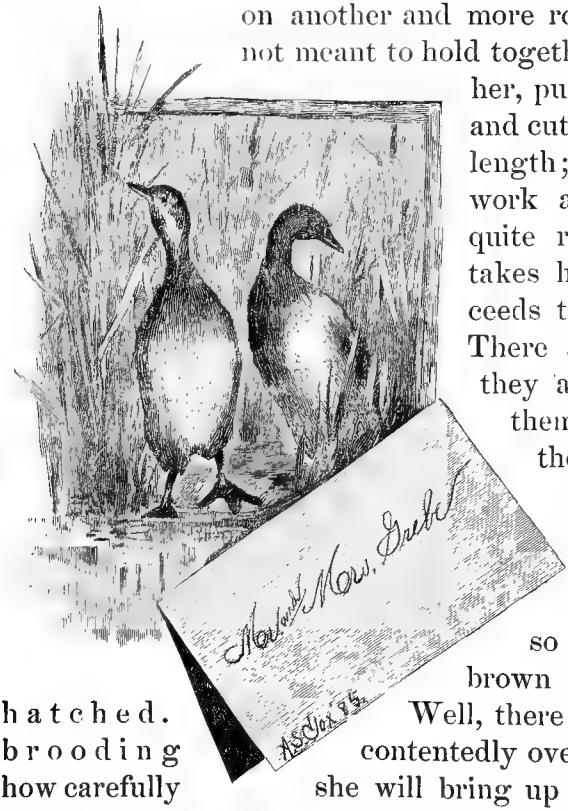
never been seen under the sea. It had four long arms, something like those of a cuttle-fish, only much less graceful, and divided at the end into five claws, or feelers. (I have since learned that two of these arms are called legs, and that the feelers are fingers and toes.) It had gleaming eyes, and in one claw it held something bright and shining. Ah! it makes me cold to think of it. To my horror the monster fixed his shining eyes on me, and swam directly towards my ledge. The crab scuttled off with my son on his back, and I was left alone and helpless. I saw one of the long arms extended; the five feelers clutched me in their grasp. I shrank down, and clung with all my might to the rock; but in vain. The shining thing in the monster's other claw was slipped under me. It cut my delicate fibres; I felt them give way one by one; and at last, with one terrible cut and a violent wrench, I was torn from my peaceful home; torn from it, alas! forever!

"I was thrown into a bag full of other sponges, which the monster had slung about his middle; and then he pursued his path of destruction. I will pass briefly over the dark days that followed the drying in the sun, till all the life was dried out of me; the fearful squeezing, with thousands of other wretches like myself, into wooden cases; the voyage over seas; finally, the exposure of my bleached and miserable skeleton in the window of a druggist's shop. All these things are too painful to be dwelt upon; and, as you know, I am now resigned to my lot. I find in you a sympathizing friend. I have water given me (though of very inferior quality) morning and night, and, were it not for the soap and the squeezing, I should make no complaint. But often, as I hang idly in my wire basket, my thoughts go back to my own dear home under the Syrian shores; and I long for a draught of the warm, delicious water, for the cool retirement of my rocky ledge, and for the sight of my dear son, riding gracefully about on the back of his crab."

SAILOR BABIES.

Birds, and birds, and birds! Have you any idea how many kinds of birds there are? I am very sorry you could not count them all. And such queer fellows many of them are! There are butcher-birds and tailor-birds, soldier-birds — the penguins, you know, who stand on the sea-shore like companies of soldiers, "heads up, eyes front, arms (meaning wings) at the sides" — and sailor-birds. It is about one of the sailor-birds and his babies that I am going to tell you now. She is called the Little Grebe, or sometimes, by her intimate friends, the Dabchick. She is a pretty little bird, about nine inches long, with brown head and back, and grayish-white breast. She and her husband are both extremely fond of the water. "We are first cousins to the Divers!" they sometimes say proudly. "The Divers are never happy away from the water, and neither are we. It is very vulgar to live on land all the time. One might almost as well have four legs, and be a creature at once!" (The Divers are a very proud family, and speak of all quadrupeds as "creatures.") Mr. and Mrs. Grebe have very curiously webbed feet, looking more like a horse-chestnut leaf with three lobes than anything else. They are excellent swimmers and divers; indeed, in diving, the Great Northern Diver himself is not so quick and alert.

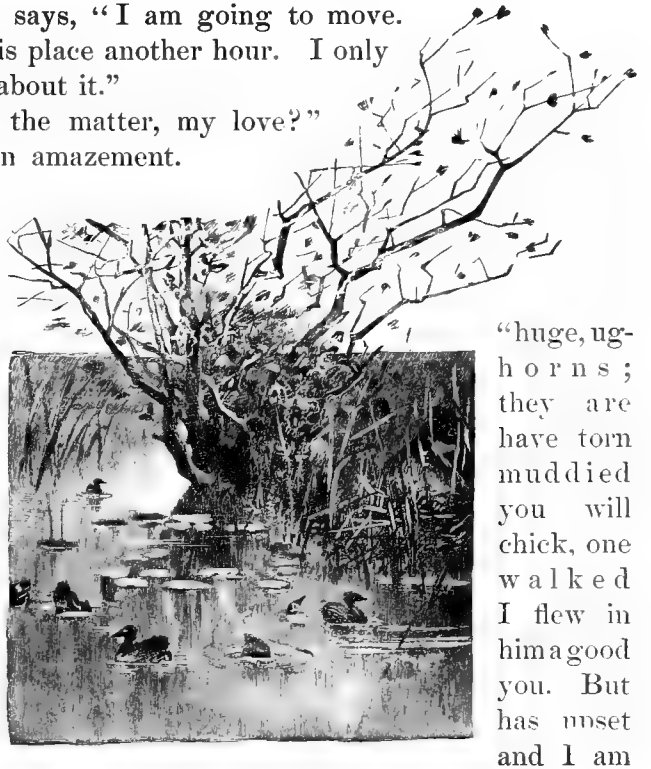
If anything frightens them, pop! they are under the water in the shaking of a feather; and you may sometimes see them in a pond, popping up and down like little absurd Jacks-in-the-box. As they think the land so very vulgar, of course they do not want to bring up their children on it. Oh, dear, no! They find a pleasant, quiet stream, or pond, where there are plenty of reeds and rushes growing in the water, and where there is no danger of their being disturbed by "creatures." Then they go to work and make a raft, a regular raft, of strong stems of water-plants, reeds, and arrow-heads, plaited and woven together with great care and skill. It is light enough to float, and yet strong enough to bear the weight of the mother-bird. While she is building it she sits, or stands, on another and more roughly built raft, which is not meant to hold together long. Mr. Grebe helps her, pulling up the water-plants and cutting off the stems the right length; and so this little couple work away till the raft-nest is quite ready. Then Mrs. Grebe takes her place on it, and proceeds to lay and hatch her eggs. There are five or six eggs, and they are white when she lays them; but they do not keep their whiteness long, for the water-weeds and the leaves that cover the raft soon decay, and stain the pretty white eggs, so that they are muddy brown by the time they are hatched. Well, there little Madam Grebe sits, brooding contentedly over her eggs, and thinking how carefully she will bring up her children, so that they will be a credit to the family of the Divers. Mr. Grebe paddles, and dives, and pops up and down about the nest, and brings her all



sorts of good things to eat,— worms for dinner, minnows for supper, and for breakfast the most delicate and appetizing of flies and beetles. One day, when he brings his wife's dinner (a fine stickleback), he finds her in a state of great excitement.

"My dear," she says, "I am going to move. I cannot endure this place another hour. I only waited to tell you about it."

"Why, what is the matter, my love?" asks Mr. Grebe, in amazement.



"Some creatures have been here," answers little madam, indignantly, — "huge, ugly monsters, with horns; cows, I believe they are called. They have torn up the reeds, and muddied the water; and, if you will believe it, Dabchick, one of them nearly walked *right over* me; but I flew in his face, and gave him a good fright, I can tell you. But the whole thing has upset me very much, and I am determined to leave the place."

"Very well, my love," says the dutiful Dabchick. "Whatever you say is always right!"

Accordingly, when she has finished her dinner, Mrs. Grebe puts one foot into the water, and paddles her raft away as skilfully as if she were an Indian in a birch canoe. She steers it round the corners, and paddles on and on, till she find another quiet nook, where there is no sign of any "creatures." Then she draws in her paddle-foot, and broods quietly again, while Mr. Grebe, who has followed her, goes to explore the new surroundings, and see what he can pick up for supper.

After a time the muddy brown eggs crack open one by one, and out come the young Dabchicks, pretty, little, fuzzy brown balls. They shake themselves, and look at each other, and say how-d'-ye-do to their mother and father; and then, without any more delay, pop! they go into the water. "Hurrah!" says one. "I can swim!" "And I can dive!" says another. "Ho! I can do both!" cries a third. "Here I go for the bottom! Catch me if you can!" and down they all go, with Mr. Grebe after them, to see that they come to no harm.

Mamma Grebe watches them, her gray breast swelling with pride. "Ah!" she says, "see what it is to belong to a good family."

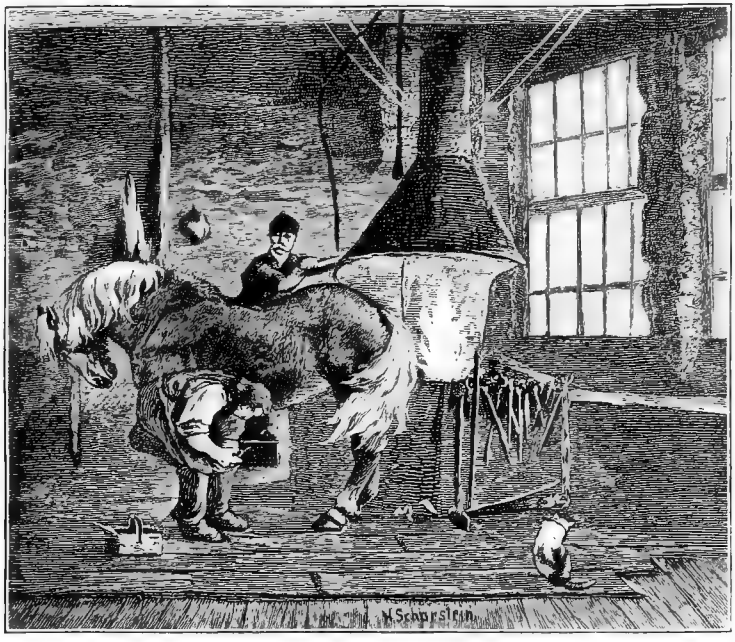
BOWSER.

Bowser is only a horse; but he knows how to behave when he wears his Sunday suit. That is more than some children know. There are little ones who make mud-pies when they have on their best clothes. Bowser never does.

Bowser drags a cart on week-days; on Sunday he goes to church with a buggy. When John puts the heavy harness upon Bowser the horse goes to the cart and backs in. When he is dressed in the nice buggy-harness he steps off proudly and gets into the shafts of the buggy. He does this all alone. He never makes a mistake.

One day Bowser had a set of new shoes. When the blacksmith put them on he drove a nail into one of Bowser's feet. John did not notice it till they were almost home. When he saw that Bowser limped a little he said, "I must lead the poor fellow back, when I get him out of the cart."

They reached home, and John took off Bowser's harness. As soon as he was free the horse turned about and trotted off. When John



called him he did not mind. He went straight back to the blacksmith.

"Hello, Bowser!" cried the blacksmith.

The poor horse said nothing, but he walked up to the man and held out his aching foot.

Then the blacksmith put the shoe on all right; and he patted Bowser kindly, and said, "You know a great deal, for a horse."

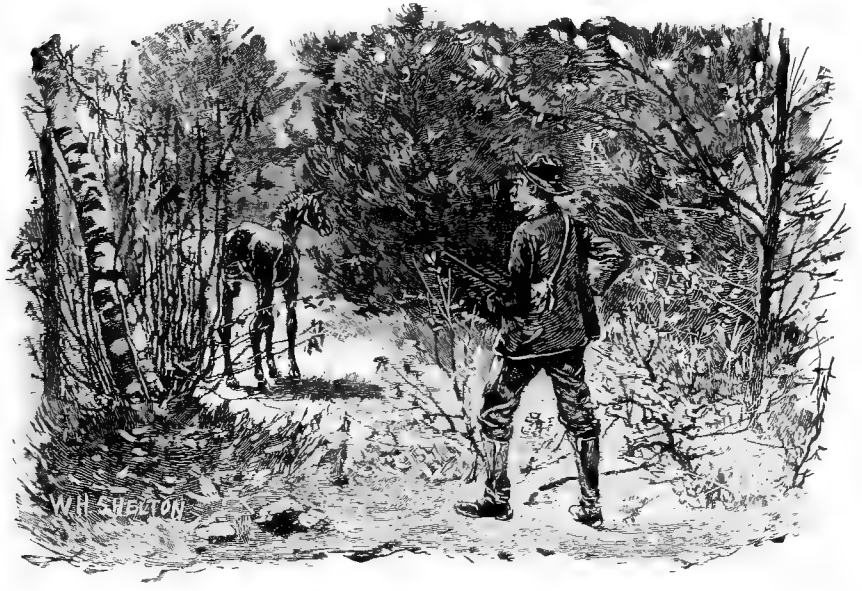
"SANDY," THE RUNAWAY COLT.

A TRUE STORY.

SANDY was a colt. Often, as he saw the big horses driven through the farm-gate into the road, on their way to town, he thought how nice it would be if he could go too. So, one day, seeing the gate open and no one in sight, Sandy trotted out to seek his fortune. In the evening, when the farm hands came to put away their horses, Sandy was nowhere to be found. Search

was made for the runaway in every nook and corner of the farm where a colt could possibly hide; but no Sandy. Days came and went. The farmers read of their neighbor's loss in the paper. Each one, as he drove to market, looked about in hopes that he

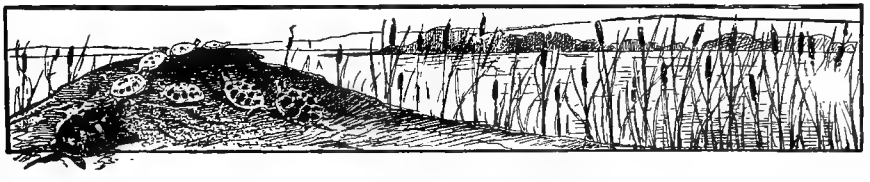
might somewhere see the missing Sandy; but all to no purpose. At last his owner gave up the search, and thought he should never



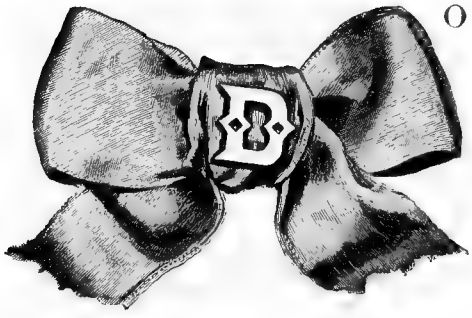
see Sandy any more. The weather was cold, the grass was withered, and the dead leaves were falling from the trees.

One morning a farmer's son shouldered his gun and started into the woods to hunt rabbits. During his tramp he came upon the living skeleton of a colt. This was all that was left of poor Sandy. With difficulty the farmer's son succeeded in leading the half-starved colt home.

Sandy never forgot this foolish adventure of his youth. Though he grew up to be a fine, able horse, and was ready for any work on the farm, he never wanted to run away again.

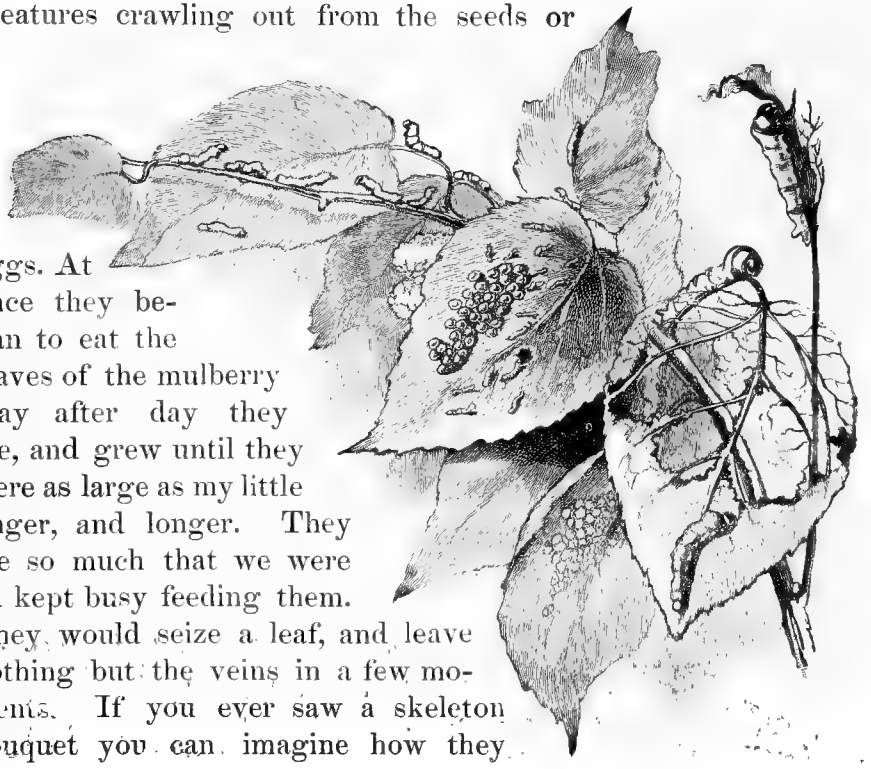


HOW SILK IS MADE.

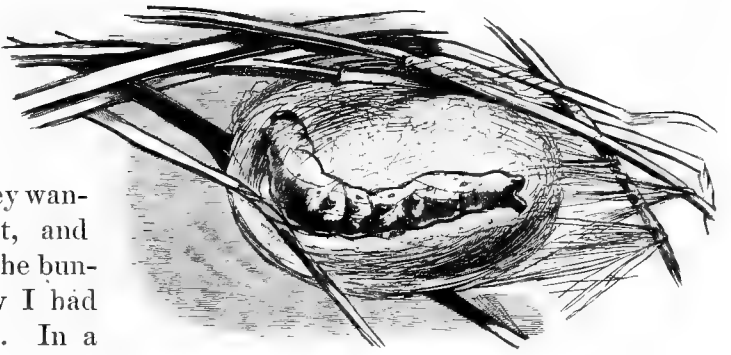


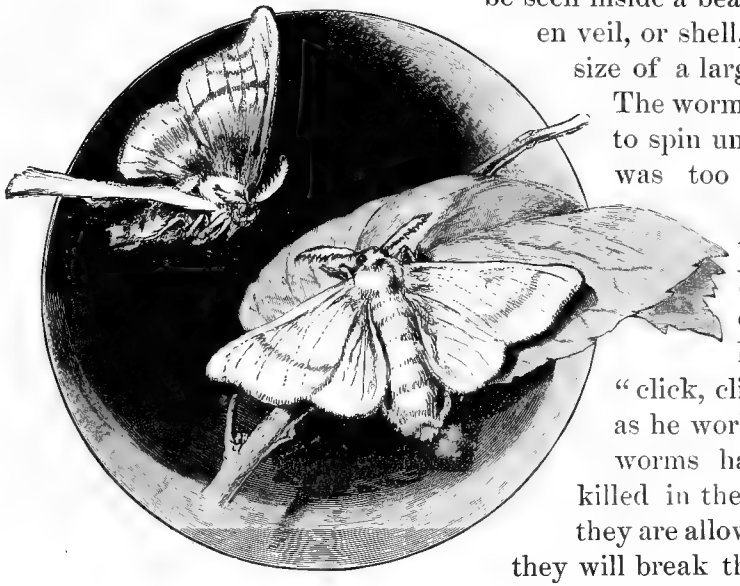
DO you ever think, children, when your pretty sashes and ribbons are tied on, and you look at them admiringly, that the glossy, beautiful silk is made by a *worm?* Some of you may have seen silk-worms; but many do not know what an interesting story their little life makes.

Last winter there was sent me a tiny package of what looked like little gray seeds, or beads. I had to keep them very cold until the mulberry leaves were well grown. Then I put the seeds in a warm place. In a day or two there were myriads of tiny little creatures crawling out from the seeds or eggs. At once they began to eat the leaves of the mulberry Day after day they ate, and grew until they were as large as my little finger, and longer. They ate so much that we were all kept busy feeding them. They would seize a leaf, and leave nothing but the veins in a few moments. If you ever saw a skeleton bouquet you can imagine how they



left the leaves. But one morning they did not seem so hungry. They wandered about, and climbed up the bundles of straw I had set for them. In a little while many of them began to spin the most beautiful silken threads, very much as a spider does. Back and forth, over and over, in loops like a figure 8, went their queer "hooded" heads. By and by each one could be seen inside a beautiful silken veil, or shell, about the size of a large peanut. The worm continued to spin until the veil was too thick for us to see through; but we could hear his little "click, click, click," as he worked. The worms have to be killed in the case. If they are allowed to live they will break the delicate threads.

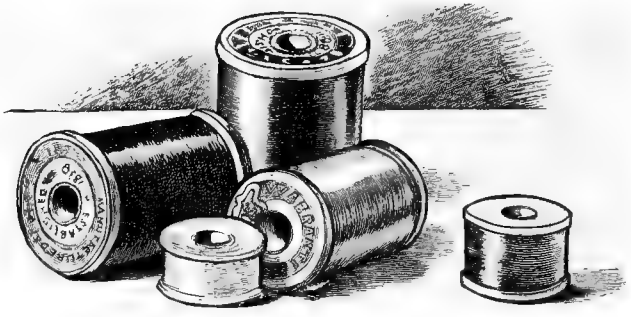




We did not kill them all, however. I wish you could have seen the room when we gathered the cocoons, which is the proper name for the peanut-shaped home of the silk-worm. All along the ceiling, behind the window-curtain, on papa's desk, in baby's over-

shoe, — which she forgot to put away, behind the pictures, — on the cord, under the broom, on the floor, around the door-knobs, — cocoons, cocoons, everywhere; countless numbers were also hung, like pretty birds' eggs, in the straws. From these, after a few days, came beautiful white *moths*, not at all like the ugly worms.

From the cocoons in which we killed the worms we reeled the delicate threads from which all our silk is made. Is it not indeed a curious story?



HOW THE PIGS WERE RAISED.

A FAMILY of ten little pigs was suddenly left motherless. What a misfortune!

Farmer Clough had raised a great many pigs, but he wondered what was to become of those wee grunters. Their mother would have known just what to do with them. The man almost wished her babies had died with her.

He would try to take care of them. Farmer Clough turned down a barrel on its side. Then he filled it half full of clean straw. The ten piggies sank out of sight in their bed. They cuddled all in a heap and went to sleep. A pretty good beginning.

When Farmer Clough went to the barn with some warm milk to feed them, he called "Piggy, piggy, piggy!"

The straw in the barrel began to move. The ten little fellows came scampering out.

The pigs were so eager for milk that they tumbled over one another. Each little pig said, "Awo-hoo, awo-hoo!" The farmer thought that meant, "Hurry up my dinner."

He placed the pan of milk on the floor. He tried to teach the little things to drink. Every one seemed afraid it would not get its share. They were piggish, you see.

Some fell head-foremost into the pan of milk. It was funny. Their owner told them to behave themselves; but they did not. Soon they were running over his feet and crying for more.

He told them more at that time was not good for them; so they crept back into the nest contented, and went to sleep again.

They grew fast, as all pigs do. With their warm milk and their fresh straw they fared well. By and by they outgrew their barrel. Farmer Clough said that every barrel of pork he ever had before grew less and less till it was empty; but this one grew more and more till it was more than full.

DAME GILFIN AND HER GOATS.

A COMELY, hard-working Scotch woman, well known to us at the parsonage, having no little ones of her own, gathered about her humble home an odd crowd of pets. The heroine of this wonderful

family was an immense goat, of yellowish-drab color, bearing the queenly name of Esther. The shaggy pet paid great attention to the minister's wife when she called at the busy cabin-home. Her ways were of a kind not always agreeable. She would put her great paws upon the lady's shoulders and sniff and sniff, until finally the mistress had to be called. Dame Gilfin knew full well what this dumb language meant, and so she said to her guest: —

"Dinna ye ken what's the matter wi' her? — Weel! weel! I'll just tell ye. When ye've yer Astrachan cloak on, Esther sets to thinking. She kens just as well as ye do that it's made of young kids'

skins. Verra likely she thinks there's some o' her ain amang them. She's a rare creature to smell, is Esther!"

At the next call a shawl was worn, in which Esther had no interest. To Esther, Dame Gilfin talked as if she were a real person. When any one called Esther pushed herself in to be noticed. She was very fond of society, and her mistress would say, "Dinna ye ken I've company to-day? Now, if ye can behave yersel, ye can

just sit doon in the far corner an' listen. If ye can't, ye can just go out-o'-doors. Do ye mind my words, Esther?"

Esther usually crouched down in a corner of the funny little cabin-parlor, and silently enjoyed the chatter going on.

It was part of Dame Gilfin's business to rear young goats, and then sell them to rich people, to be harnessed into dainty little carriages. You can see such any day in the parks, and very likely Esther's pretty kids may be among them.

For a span of thoroughly trained ones Dame Gilfin often received two hundred dollars.

A LETTER FROM A CHRISTMAS TURKEY.

DEAR LITTLE ONES:—

VERY suspicious-looking man came into the barn-yard the other day. He looked all around among my brothers and cousins. Then he pointed at me and said I was a nice, big fellow. This made me feel very proud.

When he put his hand into his pocket I supposed he was going to give me some corn. Instead of that he counted out money to my master. Then I knew he would take me away, and I began gobbling good-by to my relatives and friends of the barn-yard.

Now I am alone in the little pen he brought me to. I have been thinking of all this fuss over me, and having so many good things to eat must mean something. I gobbled to some other fowls running about in a yard, and found out from them that it was almost Christmas-time.

Now let me ease your tender little hearts about my career being so suddenly cut short. I want to tell you that in Turkeydom it is considered a great glory to be the centre of attraction at a Christmas dinner-table; to be dressed up in a nice brown coat; to be surrounded by sparkling jellies, rich cranberry sauce, and all the other good things; to hear the children cry, "Oh! Oh!" and the papas and mammas say, "What a fine turkey!" This is what we

live for, my little dears. So, when I have gobbled my last gobble, don't be sorry for

Yours, when fat,

TURKEY GOBBLER.

WHAT PUSS HEARD.

THEY were sitting before the open fire, in the twilight, telling fairy-stories. Frank had just brought in an armful of locust-wood and laid

it upon the hearth. Suddenly puss, who had been sleeping upon the rug, waked, and climbed on the locust-wood and listened.

"She hears a mouse in the wainscot," they said. "Hush!" All were silent. Presently puss returned to the rug, and made believe go to sleep. But she could have had only a cat-nap before she was

scampering over the wood-pile again. A beautiful blue and black butterfly flew up into the warm firelight, as if he had mistaken it for summer weather.

"I call that a fairy-story," said the children.

Puss had heard the butterfly break the chrysalis.

TABBY AND JOSEY.

PAPA was on the back porch smoking a cigar. Little John was playing near by with a pretty wind-wheel papa had made for him. Across the way two children were holding a yellow and white kitten by the tail. Kitty struggled to get away. By and by she did get away, and ran to Johnnie's papa, who stroked her gently, saying, "Poor kitty! poor kitty!" Johnnie gave her a saucer of milk, and she ran up and down the piazza for a bit of beef tied to a string. She lay down to rest after she had swallowed the meat, and part of the string, which mamma had to pull out of her throat.

"She is such a homely cat, I don't want her here," said mamma.

"She is a beauty," replied papa. "Let her stay."

"She is Tabby Wilson," said John. Nobody could tell why our six-year-old called the new cat "Tabby Wilson," but she goes by that name. Tabby Wilson said John's house was good enough for her to live in, so she thought she would stay.

When Tabby Wilson had been with John a few days in walked a dirty little black-and-white kitten. She was very thin and sick-looking, and Tabby Wilson flew at her, growling and spitting, with her paw raised to strike her.

"Let Josey Brooks alone, Tabby Wilson!" screamed John, taking up the poor little kitten and stroking her.

"I shall not," mewed Tabby Wilson, and she flew at her. But John took the new kitten into the kitchen and gave her some milk. So Josey Brooks and Tabby Wilson became our cats.

After a while Tab and Jo became quite good friends and played together. John harnessed them to a pasteboard box. "Get up," he

cried. "I shall not," spit Tabby. "Nor I, either," growled Josey. They ran under a chair and crouched close together.

"They won't drive, mamma," whined little John, coming close to mamma.

"They are ungrateful quadrupeds, then," said mamma.

"Quadrupeds, mamma; what are they?" asked John, stopping his whining at once.

"How many feet has Tabby Wilson?" asked mamma.

John seized Tabby and counted, "One, two three, four."

"Very well," said mamma; "if she has four feet she is a quadruped."

"And is Josey Brooks a quadruped too?"

"Count her feet and see."

"Yes, she has four; so she is a quadruped. But what am I, mamma? I have but two feet."

"You are a biped, dear; so is papa."

John threw himself on the floor and kicked his heels into the air, holding Tabby Wilson and singing, "My kitty is a quadruped, quadruped, quadruped; but I am a biped, biped, biped, biped."

FIDO'S APPEAL.

FIDO was a great pet with us all, and had so much sense that he could almost talk. One day we were sitting at work, when some one knocked at the door, and when it was opened, in walked Fido. He seemed to be in pain, and limped very much, but came straight up to me. He whined, looked at me, and then put his injured paw on my knee, as much as to say, "Help me." I took it

up, and found a sheep-burr stuck into his foot. The place was much inflamed, and so sore that I could not take out the burr without hurting him very much. So I waited for papa, who was a doctor, and knew how to manage this new patient. He laid Fido on his back, and held him down while he drew out the burr with pincers. It was like having a tooth drawn, and Fido yelled with pain; but it was soon over, and he capered with joy at the relief.

Hoppy's First Egg.

Little Emma came running home from school one day. "Oh, do look, mamma!" she cried, holding out her hands. She had something hidden in them.

"What have you there?" asked her mother.

"Guess," replied little Emma.

But just then a speckled feathery head peeped out between Emma's fingers.

"Oh, what a pretty chicken!" cried Mrs. Long. "Where did you get it?"

"Some boys gave it to me. They were going to kill the poor thing. It is lame, and I want to keep it for my own. May I, mamma?"

Papa looked in at the door at that moment, and asked, "Keep what?"

When he saw the chicken he laughed, and said he had never been in the hen business, but he would begin with Hoppy. Hoppy was the name that Emma had given the chicken.

A fine house was made out of a soap-box, and Hoppy was put to bed. Papa Long showed the little girl how to feed and care for her pet. By and by Hoppy grew to be a large hen. She was very handsome, but she always limped. Emma was very fond of her, and never neglected her.

One day Hoppy was heard singing very loud in the garden, and Mr. Long said, "Emma, I think you had better look in the nest."

Emma ran out, and soon returned in great glee, bringing a fine large egg. "Oh, do see Hoppy's beautiful egg!" she cried. "May I have it to eat all myself?"

Mamma thought it quite right that Emma should have her chicken's first egg, and the little girl put it carefully away for dinner.

When she returned from the pantry Emma found her mother

talking with a poor old woman. She was spreading some bread and butter for her. "What do you think, Emma?" she asked;

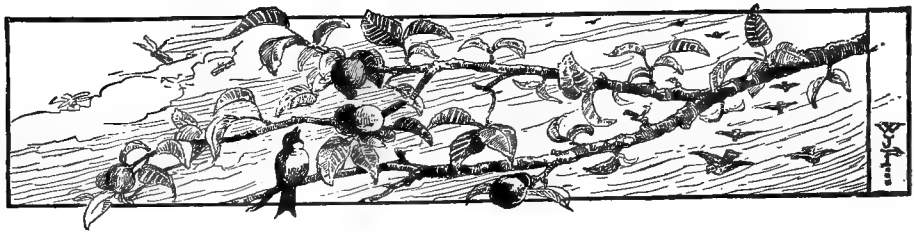
"this poor woman has nothing at home to eat." Emma stood a few moments while the old woman was telling her story; then she ran suddenly out of the room.

When she came back she went timidly up to the stranger. "Do

you like eggs?" she asked. "Because here is one. It is all my own, and you may have it."

"You precious dear!" cried the woman; "you have a good heart, like your mamma. I am very thankful indeed for the egg."

Mrs. Long was much pleased by Emma's kind conduct. So was Hoppy I fancy, for she laid a much finer egg the very next day.



WISE SNOW-DROP AND SILLY BILLY.

Little Davie Morgan lived in North Wales. His father kept a great many goats. They used to climb up and down those high, rocky mountains, and leap from crag to crag, where no other animal would dare to go.

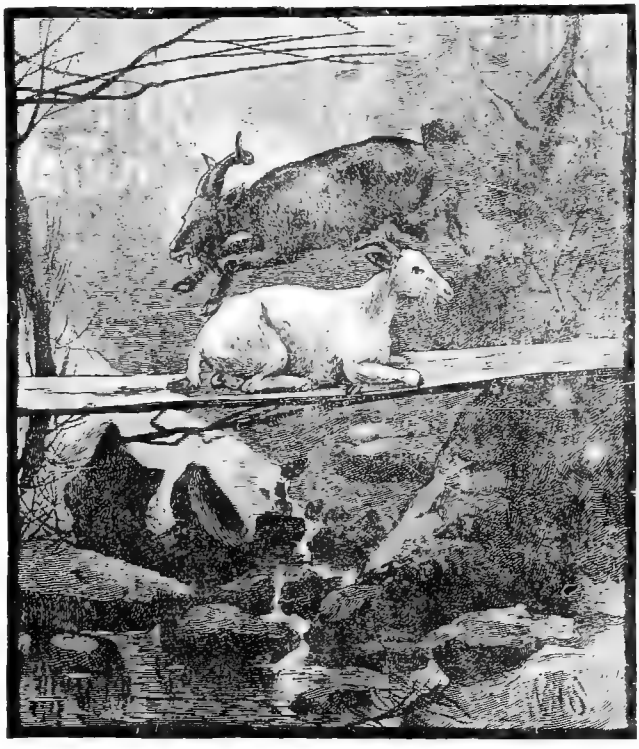
On Davie's sixth birthday his father brought down from the mountain a pair of twin kids for his birthday present.

One of them was pure white with buff ears, and Davie named her "Snow-drop." The other, a beautiful gray shaded with black, he called "Billy," after his older brother. They were to be Davie's own pets; and he did pet and feed them so that they soon grew fat and saucy. Billy, I have no doubt, really loved his pretty twin-sister, "Snow-drop;" but he delighted to tease her whenever he had a chance.

In Wales there are a great many mountain streams, narrow but deep, that go dashing over their rocky beds, making foamy waterfalls and dark pools, where the speckled trout play "hide-and-seek" on sunny days.

The only foot-bridge over some of these streams is a plank, or a

couple of small trees laid down side by side. They are round, and often slippery. It would seem dangerous crossing for anything but Welsh children and goats. Of course the folks or the animals that cross have to go over "Indian file." They could not possibly pass each other.



Billy and Snow-drop often trotted over these little bridges, he always taking the lead. One day, when he was in a very mischievous mood, he trotted over as fast as he could; then turned round and came back! In this way he met poor Snow-drop, as the rogue knew he should, about the middle of the bridge.

Then what a fuss! He capered and butted, and threatened to throw her into the river. Davie, who stood on the bank, was quite sure that "naughty Billy" would drown his beautiful pet. But he didn't; for what do you think she did after he had teased and threatened her for ever so long? Why, the sensible little creature lay down on the narrow plank. Billy, tired of the fun, took the hint, and jumped over her!

This is a true story of two Welsh goats. I think Davie was right when after this he called them "Wise Snow-drop" and "Silly Billy."

BAD SIR MOSES

Sir Moses was called a model kitten. He was nice in his habits, and grave and quiet in his behavior. To be sure he would chase wildly after a ball of yarn when Flora dragged it. And he would scamper fast enough down the garden-walk behind his little mistress, mewing with glee as he ran. But most of the time he was very still. He was asleep in Flora's lap, or lay upon the rug watching her with half-shut eyes. An old proverb says, "Still waters run deep." Perhaps the man who wrote it knew a cat like Sir Moses.

"I would like to know what becomes of my cream!" This was what mamma Painter said at the breakfast-table. The children all opened their eyes at her in surprise. "What do you mean, mamma?" asked Bessie.

"Why," replied her mother, "I bring in the cream in this little pitcher every morning, when I first come down, and put it on the table. Now, for three mornings it has been half gone by breakfast-time. Who can have taken it?"

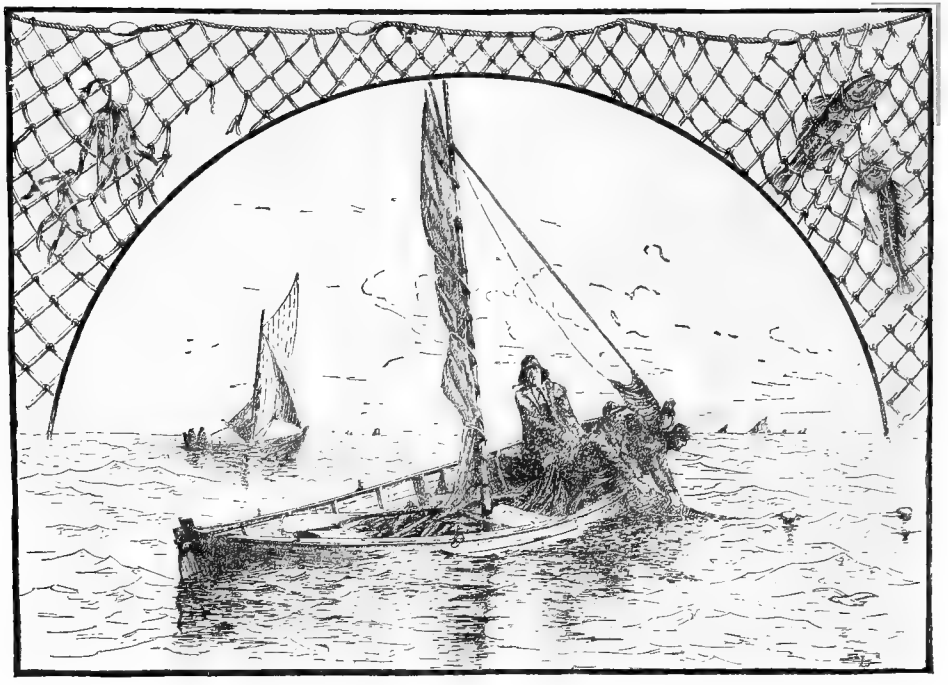
Nobody knew. The pitcher was an odd little thing, with a small neck. One fact was very strange. There was no mark of cream on the edges of the pitcher.

There was a great deal of wonder and talk about this curious loss of the cream. It happened again the next morning, and the morning after that. On the third day Bessie was heard shouting, "Ah, you rogue, I have caught you at last!" And so she had. It was that meek Sir Moses. When the pitcher was put upon the

able he waited till he was left alone. Then he leaped upon the table, and put his paw in the pitcher. You may be sure it did not take him long to lick the cream from his paw. Then he dipped

again and again, till he heard somebody coming. When the person entered, he seemed to be sound asleep.

It was planned so that the sly rogue could steal no more cream. That night nurse Katy heard Flora add to her prayer: "O God, please forgive Sir Moses, for he didn't know any better!"



C. O. D.

PROBABLY our C. O. D. notice, which will soon be familiar to the little ones,[1] if it is not now, is never seen off the coast of Norway. Yet there is the greatest place for cod in the world. During the months of January and February the C–O–D — cod — come about the Loffoden Islands from the south and west in immense numbers. It seems as if all the families of all countries could dine on those fish, and none be missed.

They arrive in what the fishermen call "cod mountains." These codfish are piled upon one another, often to a depth of more than a hundred feet. The mountains they form are wide as well as high, — great moving mountains of cod.

If you have seen a fish-net, you know it has weights along the lower edge for sinking it. When the fishermen of Norway cast

[1] C. O. D., "Collect on delivery."

their nets among the mountains of cod, they feel the sinkers hitting the fish, that seems to have barely room to swim.

Have you ever thought that creatures living in the sea have more space than we who live on the land? If it were not so, in time the fish might all be caught and eaten. Some lakes and streams, where too many men and boys go fishing, after a while have hardly any fish left in the water.

It is said that this can never happen to the sea. There the fish have plenty of places where no hooks or nets can take them. People may expect to eat broiled cod and chowder as long as the world stands. The saying will always be a true one, that "there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught."

QUEEN.

A TRUE STORY.

QUEEN was an Irish setter dog. She was not at all proud of her "blood," though she had every reason to be; but she was very proud of her nine little baby doggies. Such cunning mites they were, too, and as blind as bats!

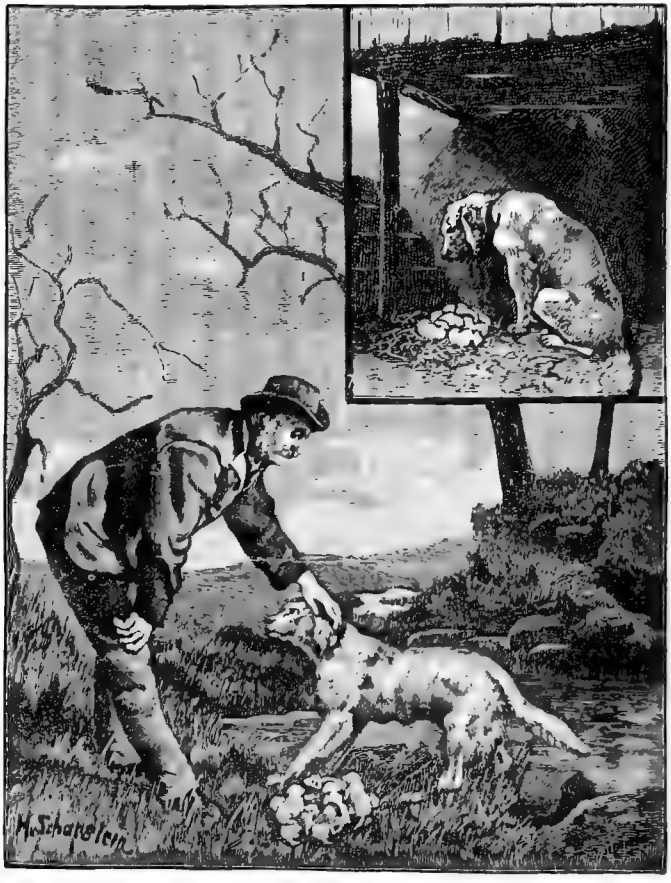
Baby doggies cannot see until they are nine days old, and these were not old at all; indeed, they were very new. Now, Queen's master thought there were nine dogs too many, and he said, "These baby doggies must be drowned in the creek."

One day, when Queen's little family were all soundly sleeping, and she had gone off to search for a bone, something dreadful happened. It was just this: the little blind doggies were carried to the creek, and all were dropped right into the water!

Drowned? You shall know.

Later in the day Queen trotted up to her master, and in her dumb way made him understand that she wished him to follow her. He did follow her, and she led him straight to the creek. There upon the mossy bank he saw — all cuddled up in a funny heap — the baby doggies!

Queen had scratched together in a snug pile some fallen leaves. Upon this pretty bed lay eight little doggies, sleeping as sweetly as if they had not been in the water at all. How did they get there?



Queen had carried them there, to be sure. She had saved her babies, all but one.

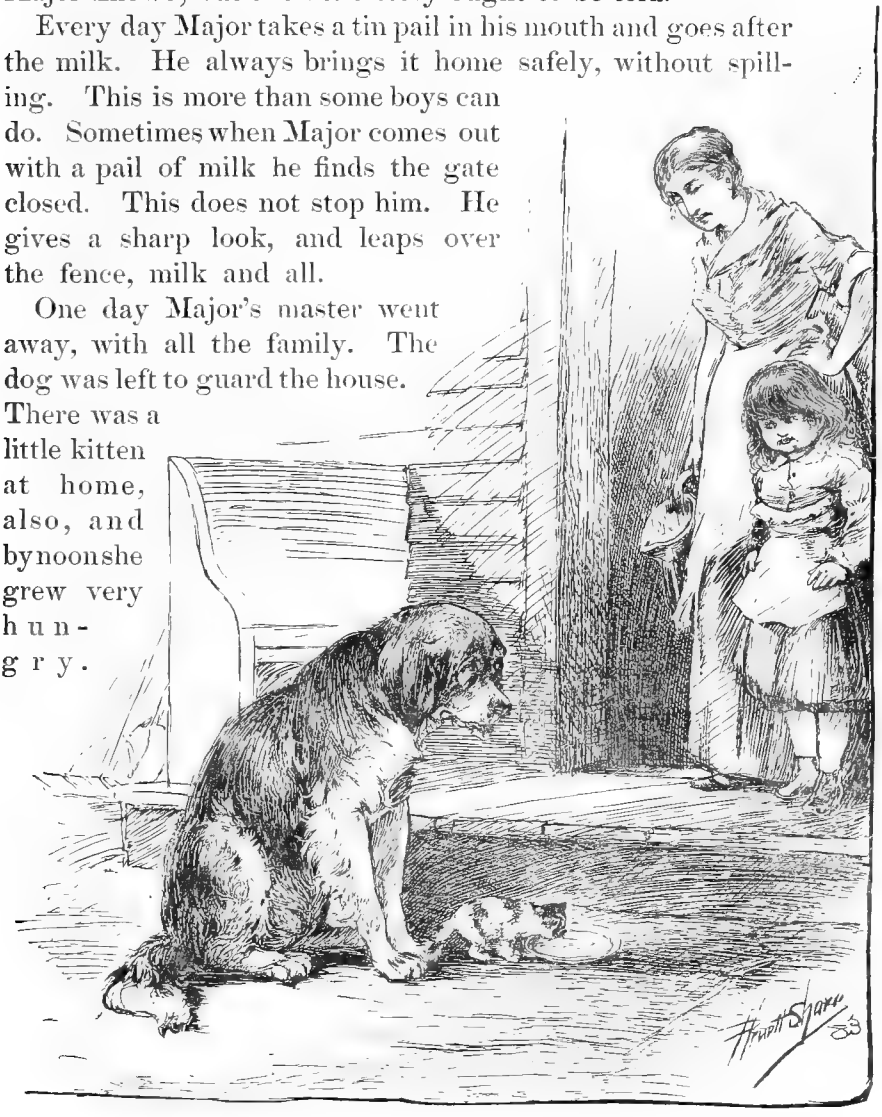
Do you not think Queen was a royal mother? The master thought so, and told her, as she had saved her babies, she might keep them. How did Queen ever find out that the baby doggies were thrown into the creek? Ah! no one knows that but Queen, and she will not tell.

MAJOR AND THE KITTEN.

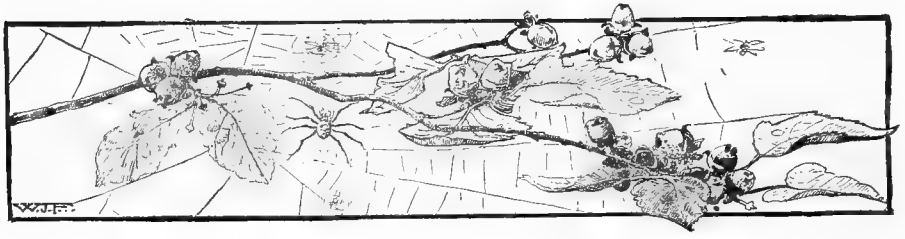
MAJOR is one of our neighbors. He is a great dog, and his father was a Saint Bernard. There is not time now to relate all that Major knows; but one little story ought to be told.

Every day Major takes a tin pail in his mouth and goes after the milk. He always brings it home safely, without spilling. This is more than some boys can do. Sometimes when Major comes out with a pail of milk he finds the gate closed. This does not stop him. He gives a sharp look, and leaps over the fence, milk and all.

One day Major's master went away, with all the family. The dog was left to guard the house. There was a little kitten at home, also, and by noon she grew very hungry.



No dinner had been left for her. She began to mew in distress. Now, what do you think Major did about it? The poor kitten could not eat the dog's bone, or perhaps he would have given her a piece. As it was, he took her in his mouth, and carried her to the farm-house where he got the milk. The people at the farm praised Major very much, and poured a saucer full of milk for the hungry kitten. When kitty had drunk enough, the faithful dog picked her up again, leaped the fence, and trotted home with her. Now, was not this a very kind, as well as wise, act for a dog?



A PEEP AT THE MENAGERIE.

Of course you have seen a menagerie, where they have so many wild animals in cages.

Did you ever think that the great shaggy lion, with his eyes shut, might be dreaming of the good old times when he and his mate and cunning little cubs were so happy, hidden snugly away in the tall grass? Or he may, perhaps, have been thinking how nice it was to eat those pretty giraffes which he used to hunt and suddenly spring upon from behind some bush or tree.

Now the old fellow does not have to find his own dinner, for it is brought to him every day. Twice a day he has all he wants to eat. When he is done eating he licks his chops, yawns once or twice, and then lies down to sleep, perhaps to forget that he is shut up in a cage far away from his native land.

He sleeps a great deal of the time, and so I don't think he can be so very unhappy. Do you?

The lion in his own home does not often hurt any one unless he is hungry or hunted. When he is very hungry he shakes his mane and whips his sides with his tail. When he does this it is very dangerous to be anywhere near him.

There are no lions in this country except those shut up in cages. They live wild only in Asia and Africa.

Most animals kept in cages are very fond of the men who feed and care for them.

One day a rough man quarrelled with one of the keepers in a menagerie. The lions and tigers tried to break out of their cages and help their keeper, they were so afraid he would get hurt. They made a great noise, and roared so loud that the people came from other parts of the menagerie and helped put out the quarrelsome man.

The giraffe, the animal which the lion is fond of hunting, is the tallest animal in the world. Is it not strange that he is also one of the most gentle, — as gentle as a kitten?

He lives on grass and hay, and his neck is so long that when he is fed, his dinner is placed in a box or pail which has to be put much higher up in his cage or stall than a man's head, so that he can eat out of it easily.

"LOOK HERE, STUPID!"

A LADY had a parrot, which, among other words, picked up the above. This sentence the bird probably learnt from hearing the housemaid scold a girl for neglect in dusting. So Poll would often surprise visitors by bursting out with "Look here, stupid!"

Poll was often allowed to go about the room out of her cage. One day, when the lady was away from home, the servants left the front door open, and Poll, being out of her cage, flew away from the house, and could not be found. All gave her up for lost.

Towards the end of summer, when the nights began to get cool, the lady was walking in some pleasure-grounds under a grove of trees close by. All at once she heard the voice of the parrot with the well-known words, "Look here, stupid!"

"Polly! Polly! Pretty Polly!" said the lady. "Come and have a bit of sugar! Come, Polly!"

Polly flew down, and was soon safe in the lady's hands. Polly had plenty of sugar when she was safe again in her cage.

MOLLIE AND THE SPARROWS.

It was snowing very hard. The white flakes came tumbling down as though they were in a hurry to get here. The wind blew, and the air was very cold. But little Mollie did not care for the cold. She sat on the rug by the fire playing with her kitten.

Mamma sat close beside her, knitting, and Mollie felt very warm and comfortable.

Pretty soon she heard a great chirping. She ran to the window and looked out. On the rose-frame, by the piazza, sat six pretty birds. They looked right in at the window at Mollie, and did not seem at all afraid. Their feathers were ruffled by the wind. They drew up first one foot then the other under them, as if trying to get them warm.

"Cheep, cheep, cheep," chirped the sparrows, looking at Mollie.

"Dear little birdies!" said Mollie. "May they come in and get warm, mamma?"

"Their pretty feathers keep the cold out; but they are hungry," said mamma.

"May I feed them, mamma?"

"Yes, Mollie; run and get a piece of bread."

Mollie soon brought the bread, which she broke up into small bits. Then mamma raised the window softly and threw out the crumbs. The birds all flew away.

"Keep very still, Mollie," said mamma; "they will soon come back."

Mollie stood by the window as still as a little mouse.

Soon the sparrows came flying back. They looked first at the bread, then at Mollie. Finally they decided to eat their supper. So they flew on the piazza and began picking up the crumbs very fast.

Mollie clapped her hands; but they were too hungry to hear her. When they had eaten all the crumbs they were tired. Then they went to sleep on the rose-frame with their heads under their wings. Mollie fed them every day until the snow was gone and there was plenty for them to eat.

AN AFTERNOON AT THE CIRCUS.

Tommy and Nellie, when they went out to walk with mamma, saw ever so many great pictures pasted on the walls. They were pictures of lions, tigers, elephants; of wild Indians, strange birds, and funny men.

The children were delighted with them, and mamma told them that all these strange sights could be seen at the circus. It was coming to town in a few days. Tommy asked no end of questions. He talked about the circus all day, and dreamed about it at night. He wanted to see the strange things; and Nellie said she must go if Tommy did. They played circus, and by turns each of them became lions, elephants, wild Indians, and Zulus.

Tommy straddled the chairs, as the great rider did the three horses. He played the clown, and tried to be funny.

Both of them were wild with delight when mamma said she would take them to the great show. They thought so much of it they could not sleep at night.

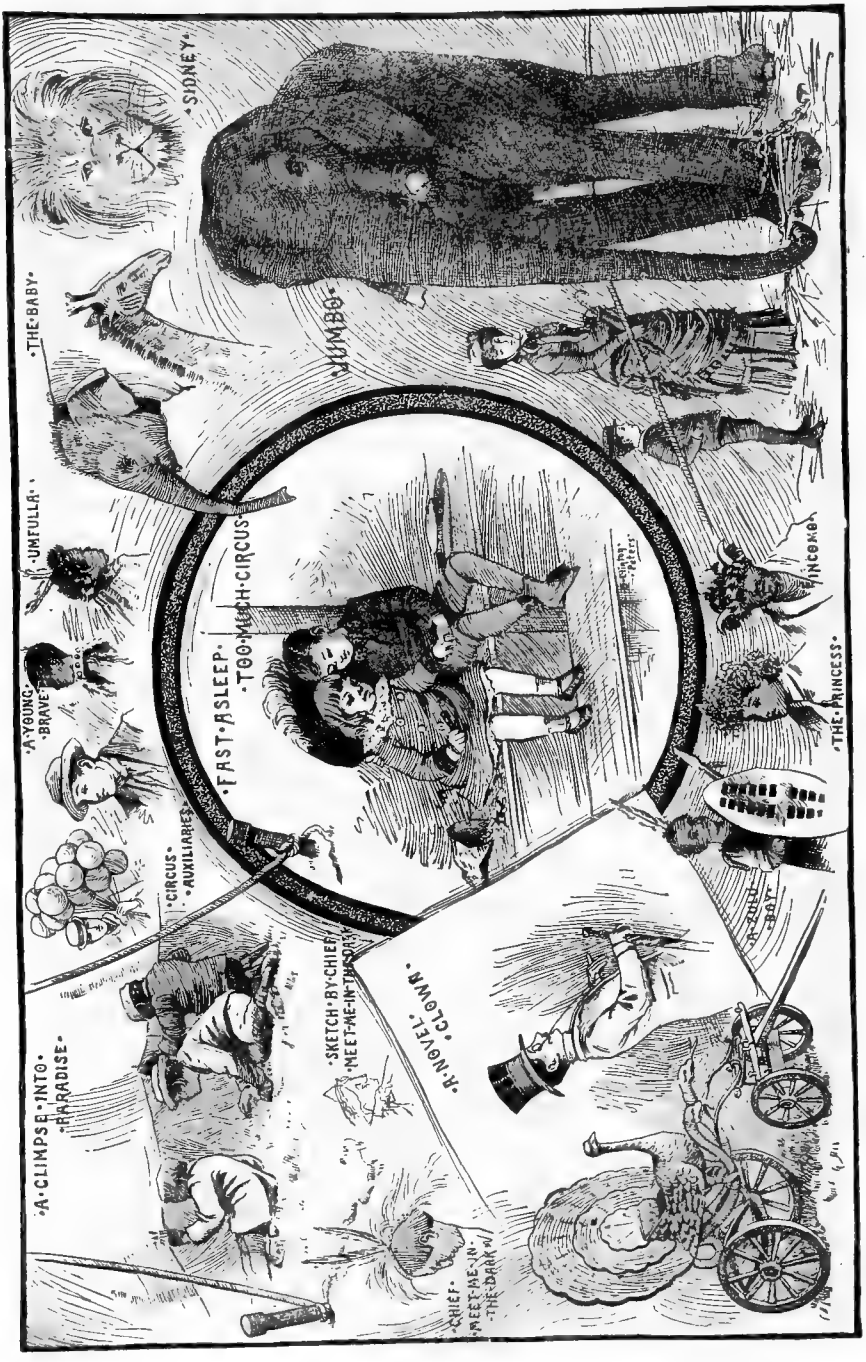
They went in a horse-car. The show was in a great tent. Thousands of people were around it. Many men, women, and boys were selling things to eat, drink, and play with. A band of music was in front of the tent.

Tommy saw a lot of wild boys trying to get under the cloth. Some of them did so, and got in without paying. But Mrs. Wilde paid for herself and the children.

In the tent they walked about, looking at Jumbo, the baby elephant, the Zulus, the wild Indians. Sidney was the name of a lion. Near him were some giraffes, tall enough to look in at the second-story windows of a house. The peacock carriage pleased them. Tommy tried to talk with the Zulu boy; but neither could understand the other.

The tent was very large, and it made a long walk to go all over it. They were very tired when they went into the second tent to see the circus. They ate peanuts and candy, and laughed when the clown stood on his head.

AN AFTERNOON AT THE CIRCUS.



They saw the men turn somersets over the backs of the elephants; but when the three-horse rider came out, both Tommy and Nellie were fast asleep. It was too much circus for them.

The next day, and for a whole week after, they talked about the circus, the elephants, and the wild Indians.

CHUCKY AND HIS PICTURE.

CHUCKY was his name. It may seem a funny name for a poor little orphan woodchuck; but that is what we called him when he came to live at our house. When he was very little we built him a house. It was a box with slats nailed across the front and sides. He was very much afraid of Rover; and the dog, thinking he was no better than any other woodchuck, would bark at him. He wanted to give him a good shaking for coming to live at "The Elms." After we had scolded him and told him not to touch, he finally let little Chucky alone. Still he looked very crossly at him as Chucky poked his little brown nose through the bars of his prison-house.

Chucky grew rapidly, and soon found that his house was too small for him. He told us so by gnawing at the slats. We let him out, and he went to live under the wood-shed.

He was a roguish little fellow, and enjoyed playing with Kitty Tom very much. But he was shy of Rover, and showed his dislike by snapping his teeth at him.

One day a "picture-man," as Neddie called him, stopped at our house to dinner. As he was about starting away Charlie exclaimed,

"Oh, let's have Chucky's picture taken!" So he ran and caught little Chucky, and put him up in Neddie's high-chair.

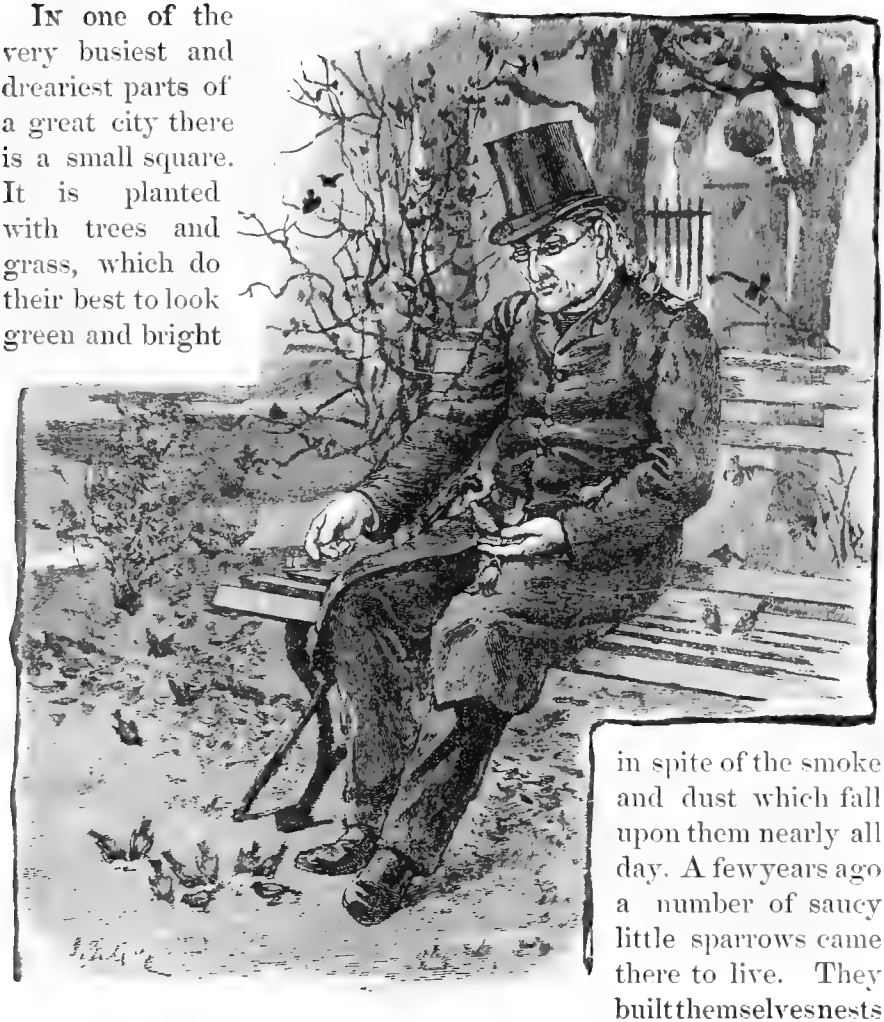
At first Chucky was frightened and wanted to jump down, but Charlie fed him with clover-tops and kept him still. The picture-

man peeped through his glass and said, "All right!" We all held our breath during the few seconds that followed. We were afraid Chucky would get tired of keeping still. Soon, however, the man said "Enough!" and we sprang to take little Chucky from his high position.

The picture looked exactly like our funny little pet, and we were very proud of it.

Charlie said he never heard of a woodchuck having his picture taken before. He thought Chucky must be the first one ever honored in that way.

WISE LITTLE SPARROWS.

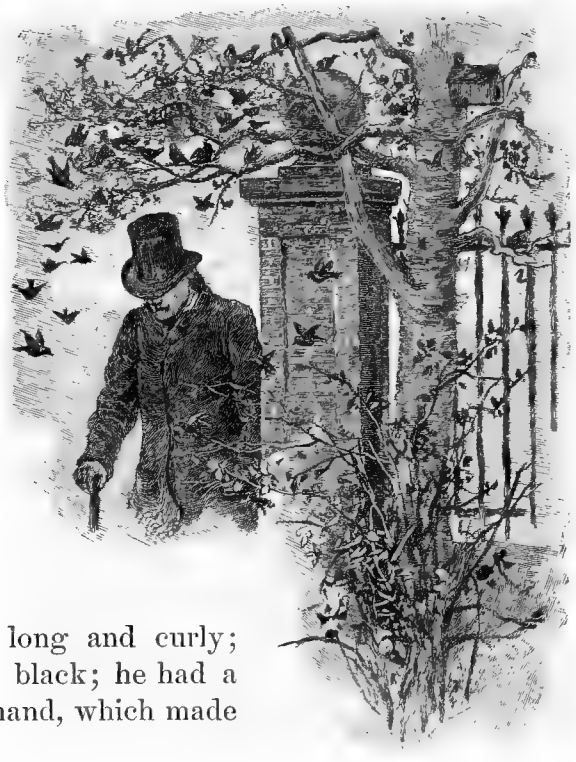


In one of the very busiest and dreariest parts of a great city there is a small square. It is planted with trees and grass, which do their best to look green and bright in spite of the smoke and dust which fall upon them nearly all day. A few years ago a number of saucy little sparrows came there to live. They built themselves nests high up in the dusty trees, where naughty boys could not easily get at them.

The keeper of the square was a rough, red-faced man; but he grew to be very fond of these little birds. He took such good care of them that no bad boy dared to throw stones at them while he was near.

They knew this so well that they hopped about the paths, look-

ing for worms, or took their baths in the fountain without fear, while he was cutting grass or cleaning up leaves. When he was away they kept up in the trees, only flying down once in a while, when nobody was in sight.



One morning, very early, a tall, straight old gentleman walked through the square. He was a very odd-looking man. The little birds noticed it, and talked a good deal about him, up in their trees.

He was so large that the red-faced man looked like a little boy beside him. His gray hair was long and curly; his eyes were bright and black; he had a heavy cane in his right hand, which made him look quite fierce.

He saw the little birds and whistled to them; but they had lived too long to trust anybody but their red-faced friend.

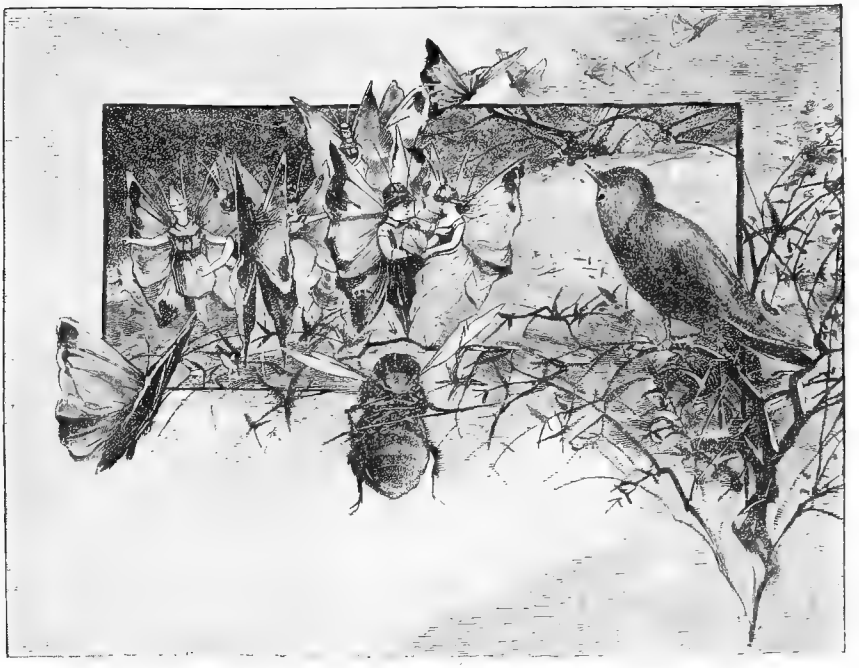
Every day after that, at five o'clock, when the keeper opened the iron gate, the tall man walked through the square. As he did so he took some bread from his pocket and scattered crumbs along the broad walk. At first the little birds paid no attention to him; then they began to come down after he had gone; next they ventured after a crumb before he was well out of the square. As they found he never hurt them, a few of the boldest began to eat their breakfast at his very feet. The saucy sparrows had grown so bold that they would perch on his head, his shoulders, and his hands, and even tangle their claws in his long gray hair.

The sparrows learned to know his figure as he came down the street. They would wait for him by the gate, eager for their break-

fast and morning frolic. He was a very wise old man, for he had studied all his life. But none of the greetings he had all day pleased him so much as that of the wise little birds who knew him as a friend.

The Butterfly Wedding.

Some butterflies gave a party. Velvet-Body, a very handsome young butterfly, was going to marry Miss Golden-Wing. They held the party in a summer-house, and nearly everybody was invited. Old Mr. and Mrs. Butterfly were nearly a month getting ready, sending out the invitations, laying in the good things to eat, and so on. Robin Redbreast said that he would pipe for them all to dance. Bumblebee stood guard at the door. The cutworm wanted to come; but the butterfly family all said No, and when they were told that they were worms themselves once, got very red in the face, and only said, "We've got up in the world since then." They served milk and honey in bluebells turned upside down, and some very nice fresh dew-drops flavored with violets. A military-looking butterfly gave the bride away, and as she danced the first set with her new husband she showed off her rose-leaf fan and little slipper of dwarf-pear blossom. The bride wanted to have strawberries; but it was too early in the season. Miss Jenny Wren sang a pretty love-song. There was cider handed in little pink shells and made of apple-blossoms. The



carpet was of lovely moss. The pale moonlight was very becoming to all the ladies, and every one seemed happy. After the moon went down the gentlemen saw the ladies all to their homes, using fire-flies as lanterns. Old Mrs. Butterfly swept the crumbs all up and set the summer-house to rights, and pretty soon all was still as a mouse.